MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

SEPTEMBER 2004 • $4.00 • #256

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MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL 0182
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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth (not much), here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so...) lists of stuff we reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland-LP
- POP RIVETS-Greatest Hits-LP
- DEAD MOON-Dead Ahead-LP
- FUCKED UP/HAYMAKER-split EP
- HEADACHE CITY-Knee Jerk Reaction-EP
- DEATHSQUAD-1939-EP
- RIISTEYT-Skitsofrenia-12"
- THE OUTCASTS-Self Conscious Over You-LP
- BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS-American Bastard-LP
- PONYS-live / SLEEPER CELL-live

ROB COONS

- MK ULTRA/LOS CRUDOS-split EP
- DIRECT CONTROL-Religious Rampage-EP
- DROPDEAD/LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-split EP
- SHOCK TROOP-Suck My Blood-EP
- KARNVAPEN ATTACK-Secretos, Mentiras- EP
- MUGA-LP
- SOULCRAFT-Absolute Suspicion-LP
- THE BRIEFS-Sex Objects-LP
- FUCKED UP/HAYMAKER-split EP
- THE RITES-Wish You Never Knew-12"

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

- RIISTEYT-Skitsofrenia-12"
- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland-LP
- APPENDIX-Money Is Not My Currency-LP
- V/A-1382 The Persian New Waves-LP
- V/A-Time of Hell-LP
- RHINO 39-Prolixin Stomp-EP
- FUCKED UP/HAYMAKER-split EP
- HOSENFEFER-Knife In My Back-EP
- V/A-Fort Worth Teen Scene Vol 3-LP
- POISON IDEA-Feel the Darkness-LP

PAUL CURRAN

- DEAD MOON-Dead Ahead-LP
- APPENDIX-Money Is Not My Currency-LP
- LOVE SONGS-All Branches No Trunk-CD
- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland LP
- DISTRICT-My Babies Number/Dangerous Dub-45
- HOLY MOUNTAIN-Bloodstains Across Your Face-LP
- HUMAN ORDER-Parasite-EP
- THE YELLOW PRESS-12" & EP
- GIANT HAYSTACKS/REACTIONARY 3-live
- STOCKHOLM SYNDROME/SHORT EYES-live

JONATHAN FLOYD

- BLOCKO/MINORITY BLUES BAND-split EP
- THE BRIEFS-Sex Objects-LP
- DISTRICT-My Babies Number/Dangerous Dub-45
- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland-LP
- THE CINCH-Shake If You Got It-CD
- LOVE SONGS-All Branches No Trunk-CD
- DEAD MOON-Dead Ahead-LP
- HUNCHES-LP & EP
- HEADACHE CITY-Knee Jerk Reaction-EP
- PONYS live / HUNCHES-live

JEFF HEERMANN

- PF COMMANDO-Manipulerade Mongon-LP
- POISON IDEA-Feel the Darkness-LP
- CRIMINALLY INSANE-Oh My Satan-EP
- HUNCHES-Hobo Sunrise-LP
- HUNCHES-Fuck Disco Beats-EP
- MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE-EP
- POP RIVETS-Greatest Hits-LP
- THE REAL LOSERS-Don't Leave Me Now-EP
- GOVERNMENT ISSUE-First Demo 1980-EP
- MENTALLY ILL-Gacy's Place-LP

KENNY KAOS

- TEXAS TERRI BOMB!-Your Lips... My Ass-LP
- DIRTY FINGERS-Rock-n-Roll Ain't Easy-EP
- DISTRICT-My Babies Number/Dangerous Dub-45
- THE BRIEFS-Sex Objects-LP
- THE HEARTATTACKS-Challenge You-45
- THE REAL LOSERS-Don't Leave Me Now-EP
- THE LOCOMOTIONS-Teacher-EP
- THE FE FI FO FUMS-Electrofize Me/Wild One-45
- POP RIVETS-Greatest Hits-LP
- AGROTOXICO/RASTA KNAST-split LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- OPERATION S-LP
- THE REAL LOSERS-Don't Leave Me Now-EP
- MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE-EP
- THE LOCOMOTIONS-Teacher-EP
- HEADACHE CITY-Knee Jerk Reaction-EP
- DETENTION-Too Noisy (Live 1984)-EP
- THE REVELONS-CD / THEE FINE LINES-LP
- POP RIVETS-Both LPs / FE FI FO FUMS-45
- HUNCHES-Fuck Disco Beats-EP
- CONTROL ROOM / FAHRENHEIT 9/11-films

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE:
#148, 150-151, 153-154, 156 pts. 1 & 2, 159-163, 166, 168-172, 174-175, 178-181, 184-210, 213-227, 229-250 are as stated above in subscription info.

See page after next.

DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
Ad Reservations: call to make sure.

Ad Copy In (with payment):
by 15th of previous month.
Issue out: by 2nd week of following month.

★★ AD RATES & SIZES!! ★★
1/6 page: (2 3/8-x 5") $30
1/3 page long: (2 3/8-x 10") $85
1/3 page square: (5-x 4 7/8") $100
1/2 page: (7 1/4-x 5") $150
Full page (7 1/4-x 10") $400

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We will not accept major label or related ads, or ads for comps that include major label bands. We reserve the right to refuse ads for any reason at any time. Send ads on paper, properly sized, or as TIFFs at 300 dpi—payment by mail.

CLASSIFIEDS: NEW PRICE! $2 for a maximum of 40 words. No racist, sexist or fascist material. Send typed if possible.

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See page 5 for foreign distribution info.

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www.maximumrocknroll.com
mrr@maximumrocknroll.com
(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible–one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only release. See records section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

RAY LUJAN

- THE JOLT-CD
- THE BRIEFS-Sex Objects-LP & live
- STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-Guitar and Drum-CD
- THE ERGS!-CD / CRISIS WHAT CRISIS-CD
- 3 MINUTE MOVIE/THE MILES APART-split EP
- ONLY CRIME-CD / THE CINCH-CD
- BLOCKO/MINORITY BLUES BAND-split EP
- NOT VERY GOOD-EP / STOCKYARD STOICS-CD
- V/A-Boss Tunage Singles Col. #2-CD
- ANTI-FLAG-live / REACTIONARY 3-live

BOBBY MANIC

WILL RISK

WHERE THE HELL *ARE* THESE DUDES?

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

- REGRESS-Look Who's Pulling the Strings-EP
- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland-LP
- THE YELLOW PRESS-12" & EP
- BLOCKO/MINORITY BLUES BAND-split EP
- CAREER SUICIDE/JED WHITEY-split LP
- PAY TOILETS-FreedomRock-LP
- HUNCHES-Fuck Disco Beats-EP
- TEN VOLT SHOCK-LP / RHINO 39-Xerox-EP
- HOLY MOUNTAIN-Bloodstains Across Your Face-LP
- POP RIVETS-Greatest Hits-LP

DONNA POOLE

- OKMONIKS-Whatcha Gonna Do?-EP
- HEADACHE CITY-Knee Jerk Reaction-EP
- GOVERNMENT ISSUE-First Demo 1980-EP
- DISHWASHERS-EP
- STREET TRASH-Street Trash-EP
- THE HEARTATTACKS-Challenge You-45
- VILETONES-Screaming Fist-EP
- THE BRIEFS-Sex Objects-LP
- POP RIVETS-Greatest Hits-LP
- POP RIVETS-MT Sounds from Anarchy Ranch-LP

BRUCE ROEHRS

- AVO/RUNNAMUCKS-split EP
- TEXAS TERRI BOMB!-Your Lips… My Ass-LP
- THE RITES-Wish You Never Knew-12"
- V/A-Destroy Comp Two-LP
- STRUNG UP-LP / DEATH TOLL-EP
- STREET TRASH-Street Trash-EP
- RAMPAGE-Heads In A Vice-EP
- THE BOILS-The Ripping Waters-EP
- CAREER SUICIDE/JED WHITEY-split LP
- U.S. ROUGHNECKS/NUTS & BOLTS/PUNISHMENT-live

MIKE THORN

- AUTONOMIA-CD / DROPDEAD-live
- SIGNAL LOST-Children of the Wasteland LP
- MK ULTRA/LOS CRUDOS-split EP
- DIRECT CONTROL-Religious Rampage EP
- FUCKED UP/HAYMAKER-split EP
- DROPDEAD/LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-split EP
- MUGA-LP / STRUNG UP-LP
- SICK TERROR-Vida Mediocre-EP
- HUNCHES-LP & live / SLEEPER CELL-live
- NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS-live

RYAN WELLS

- SLUGFUCKERS-Cacophany 1979-81-CD
- GOVERNMENT ISSUE-First Demo 1980-EP
- HUNCHES-Fuck Disco Beats-EP
- MENTALLY ILL-Gacy's Place-LP
- OPERATION S-LP
- V/A-1382 Persian New Waves-LP
- HEADACHE CITY-Knee Jerk Reaction-EP
- THE FE FI FO FUMS-Electrofize Me/Wild One-45
- THE LOCOMOTIONS-Teacher-EP
- THE NEINS-Skinny Black Jeans/B. Gordy-45

ZINE TOP TEN

- Artcore #21
- Blackthorn #4
- Born Caught #0
- Connoisseurs of Concrete
- Dig It! #31
- High Heels Slut #7
- Peops #2
- Tenacious #6, 7
- The Threat of Dialects? #1
- Trouble in Mind #6

ZINE SHITWORKERS

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#148/Sept '95. Soda Jerks, Toe Rag, Thorazine, Sacred Straight, Wizo, Opposition Party, Moody Jackson, Adversives, Opcion Crucial, Rebel, Rebel, Teen Idols, Walking Ruins.

#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#159/Aug '96. Smugglers, Tone Deaf Pig-Dogs, Too Many Records, Man Afraid, Blind Side, Vox Populi, Fun People, Fat, Drunk & Stupid, BrandNewUnit, Death Wish Kids.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#169/June '97. Hand Skin, Cluster Bomb Unit, Jihad, Purgen, Speed Queens, Remission, Halflings, The Old Man, Deface.

#170/July '97. Bristle, Mine, Tedio Boys, The 4 Cockroaches, Absconded, Meanwhile. Broken, (Young) Pioneers, Hoodrat.

#171/Aug '97. Violent Society, Strychnine, Idiots, Knuckle Heads, Race Traitor, Patrick Grindstaff, Misanthropists.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#178/Mar '98. Economics issue. Forgotten Rebels, Dirtys, Josh Collins, American Steel, Letterbombs, Gyogun Rend's, Go-Devils, Room 41, Tone Deaf Pig Dogs, Garage Rats.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#213/Feb '01. Fun People, Onward to Mayhem, Ugly Pop, Midnight Evils, Atrocious Madness, Bread & Water, Josh Peach, Zodiac Killers.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04 The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah

#252/May '04 Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos, SE Asia, Germany, Iceland.

#253/June '04 Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI, Texas, Germany, UK, New Hampshire

#254/July '04 No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany

#255/August '04 Punks Not Dead, Reagan Is Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

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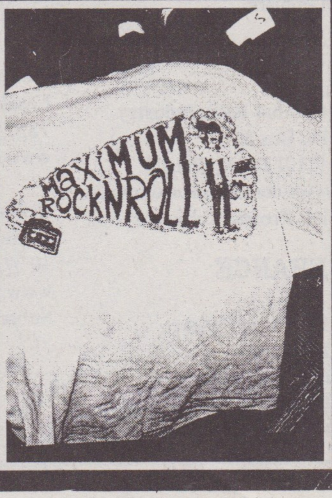

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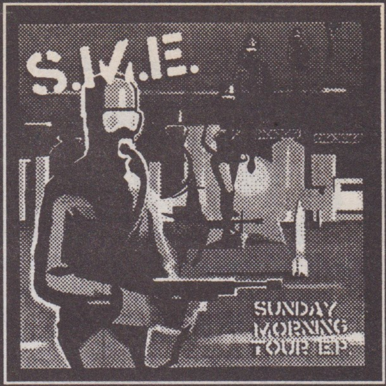

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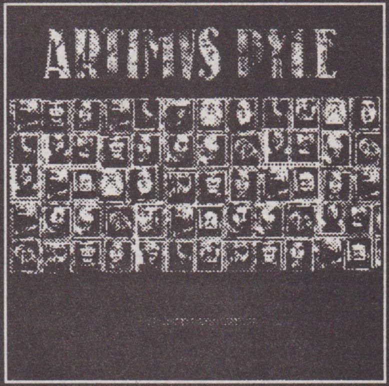

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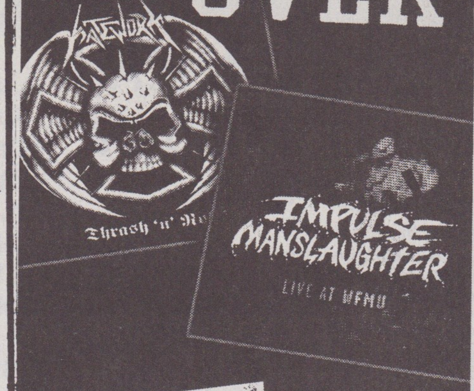

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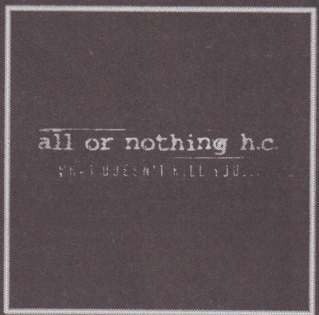

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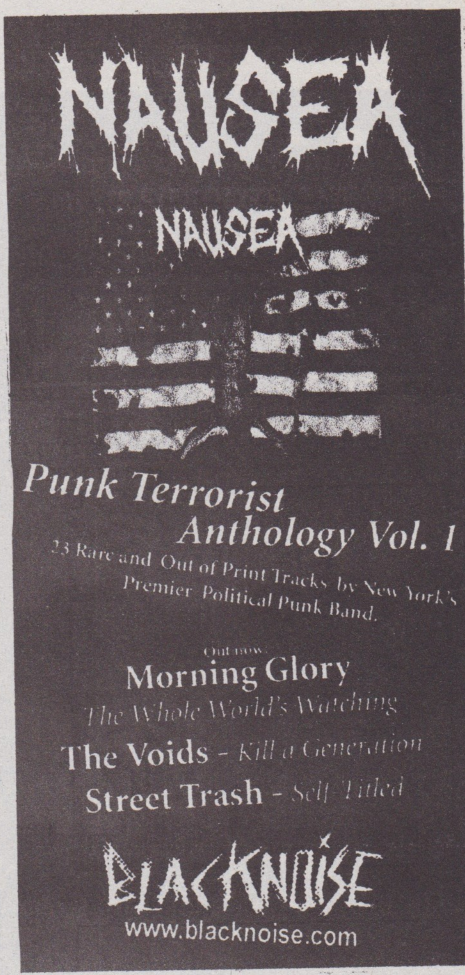

LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Hello—

I would just like to say that as an official southerner, I am offended that Hal would claim that bands from Texas are from "the south." They are, in fact, from Texas...or the southwest, if you will. "The South" extends from Virginia (loosely) to Arkansas and Louisiana…going no farther north than Kentucky and no farther south than the panhandle of Florida (south of the panhandle is simply "Florida").

I'm not trying to fuck with him...it's just that southerners don't take that shit lightly. I mean, I'm always cautious to say "the Bay Area" and not "California" because saying the latter just lumps you in with Orange County. And fuck that, right?

Much love,
—Greg Harvester
(currently in Mississippi)

Dearest Jerry Booth—

Hello, at last. This is Ed of the *Chairmen of the Bored*. I just received a photocopy of the review that you gave us in *MRR*. I would like to have gotten the whole issue, but, oh well. One day I hope to be put on the mailing list, but for now I am very broke. Well, as you can tell, the *C.O.B.* is done in prison and well, needless to say, it is a very difficult task, seeing that I am in one prison and the other Chairmen are spread out in prisons also. The communication aspect is something of a challenge.

I am the only one at this prison that does anything like this and to be open about what we do and to put up with this shit in here with all of the small minded fucks, things get frustrating and I am just trying to stay busy with the *C.O.B.* and I try to convince *MRR* just to hook me up! But you know how it is. Or do you? Well, I have to say that I really loved the review and I thank you so much. It really helps. The fact that it is just out there means that I and the other *C.O.B.*s still have a voice. I hope to hear from you soon and I hope that I can one day convince someone to (pay) for a sub from *MRR*!! Well, I just thought that I would write you this little note and I hope to hear from you soon. And if you feel the urge to send this Chairman stuff, well go ahead—fliers, zines, photos of things and stuff, copies of *MRR*, and stuff for our cut & paste! Well, thank you again. Oh and by the way, listen to Crass!! I want Crass Art!

—Chairmen E Voidaka
aka Edward E Verner

Whomever is able—

This is @Jacc extending much respect to your whole outfit. At this present moment, I'm in prison and have been for seven years now. This is my first time writing to you, so I hope our intro is met with mutual respect.

My sole purpose for writing is to ask for some support. I was recently sent two copies of your zine, #226 and #227. I truly like your articles / info. I'm 39 with three kids, a beautiful wife and my existence in the scene has been bittersweet.

I don't know how most black people who are into the scene, but my experience has been way out. First off, racism is not exempt from punk rock. People only do what they learn from their parents, so with that they act natural—to them it's natural. In and out of the scene, I've been called a "nigger" and challenged to fights. Especially when the Suicidal Tendencies started their gang and other LA kuts that evolved at that time has been a constant reminder of what is false. Growing up in LA, Pomona, Compton, La Mirada and OC, I've met some good and bad people, but I choose to accept punk rock into my life for the fight of it. To fight against the things that hold us back. I came up with the old skool cats DK's, Black Flag, Circle Jerks, Peter and the Test Tube Babies, Vandals, Bad Brains, The Dickies, and 45 Grave (one of my favorites). I don't discriminate in what I listen to.

Some people are geographical music lovers. They only listen to East Coast punk or wherever they live. The only support their local artist. I don't care where you're from, I care where you're at mentally. If you have a message I like, then you've got my support. I've read a couple of letters suggesting that the old should come again instead of returning as what made them. There will always be room for criticisms, but damn, why criticize the cats that paved the way for the younger ones?

I'm in for burglary and forgery of a stolen check in the amount of $250. Trying to cash a stolen check, I got 25-life. I can play the race thing and say because I'm black I got all this time. For example only, there was a white guy I met in the county jail I was in in '96. He was from San Diego. He told me what he was in for. He was caught with a 32 different IDs and 30 different credit cards. This wasn't the first time he'd been caught by the same agency. Our trials were going on at the same time in different courtrooms. My outcome was totally different from his. This guy was a speed demon and quite spun out and ended up getting 32 months for forgery, fraud and grand theft. I will never forget that guy. I hope he cleaned up and straightened out his life.

To the readers of this zine, please support your bro and sis in prisons throughout the world. Do not let us go unloved, especially you die hard punk rockers. The rant and rave is out there, let it match the duty of support. I just wanted to share a small bit of my life. It's an awesome thing to have an outlet, to be able to express to others my existence. Stay proud, stay punk. My sincere respect to the writers and staff of this outfit, as well as your readers. If you ever run across a person who doesn't know what you know, enlighten them on the revolution.

Sincerely,
Anarchy Jacc

Anandi—

Thanks for printing my letter in #254. Since Arwen closed her response with "enough already" I'm not going to reply to her, but since I have not had any correspondence with you I decided to respond to some of the points you raised in your response to my last letter.

First, you and I are actually in complete agreement on one thing. I also believe that the noble goals that I mentioned for which some people leave the punk scene (volunteering at homeless shelters. etc.,) are "not in the slightest bit incompatible with being a punk rocker." The point I intended to make was that as some people become more involved with other activities it puts a squeeze on their free time. As they get older, their participation in the punk scene is often one of the first casualties. Some people can manage a combination of punk and social activism and I think that is wonderful.

As for the other areas where we don't agree so much I think it is a difference of interpretation. When you and Arwen look at Rich's writing on his behavior, you see a guy who is still defending his actions. When I look at that same writing, I see some of the signs of that as well. However, when I balance it out with his other comments indicating a desire to change, I see a person who either may be completely insincere or he may be telling the truth and can change his ways. As for which of these two extremes Rich actually is none of us can know. It is the same with Sean. Arwen feels that his statements such as "if you're going to ask Todd, Felizon, and me to stop publication on a book that has already been printed, the least you can do is point to the spot on the doll where the bad man touched you" and "you can't call kissing a breast or feeling up a woman who chooses to sleep in your bed sexual assault" are examples of Sean's "dismissive" and "defensive" attitude about the subject. When I read these same statements I can see how they can be interpreted as "dismissive" and "defensive." But I can also find many other quotes from his writing on the subject (most of which I mentioned in my first letter so I won't repeat them here) that show a more humane understanding of Rich's accusers. Is Sean in denial about Rich's true nature and simply protecting his friend or does Sean see enough decency in Rich to continue being his friend and to help him to change his ways? Again, none of us can truly know what Sean is feeling inside. We could choose to believe the worst as it appears you and Arwen have done.

I have no problem with your criticizing Rich. In my first letter I agreed with Arwen's assessment of him as a "jerk." The main area of our disagreement isn't whether or not Rich should be criticized for his actions; the issue is what comes after the critique. For me it does not represent any compromise on an anti-sexual abuse, pro-woman stance to say to Rich, "You say you want to change. Good luck with that. We'll be watching." I can't see how a firm critique tempered with cautious optimism is such an offensive concept. It does not kiss the abuser's ass nor slap his victims in the face. At the very least, this approach maintains a tough stance on the issue of abuse without giving in to our worst suspicions about the abuser, suspicions that we can only hope will never manifest themselves again. Without being a woman there is no way that I can know how differently I would feel if at all about this situation. Looking at the problem as objectively as I can I have determined that this cautious optimism is one of the few things that we as a community can offer to possibly help abusers change their ways. Showing that we only believe the worst about Rich and Sean indulges in a form of negativity that I feel impedes any chances for positive change.

I recall seeing something on TV (maybe it was 60 Minutes) when I was younger about a Jewish couple that had befriended a member of the Klan. Apparently, because of their friendship, the Klansman had rescinded his previous beliefs. I remember that the husband from this couple had died and it showed the former Klansman giving the eulogy and breaking down in tears. It left a deep impression on me. This is exactly the form of imaginative interaction we need by at least some members of our society to help others change their ways. Perhaps the Jewish couple had befriended other Klansman who didn't change. I don't know. I'm sure they had friends and family who thought that they were deeply mistaken to associate with a Klansman, and, yet, somehow they convinced at least one person to change.

Your response also concluded that, "you claim not to be a 'macho jerk' on the basis of how you listen to women so much, but you're not listening at all right now. And so you're not hearing what us women are saying, like that 'hey—you're being a jerk. And it's something you should maybe deal with.'" In reality, if I hadn't been listening to Arwen and now, you, these letters would never have been written. I found Arwen's initial column about the accusations to be so riveting and convincing that I immediately went back to re-read Sean's column to see if I had missed something. It was only when I compared her writing to his that I began to feel her arguments were narrow and lacked a broader vision for how we as a community should deal with these issues. I take the things that you and Arwen have said about this subject very seriously as I am sure other *MRR* readers do as well. I may not always agree but that does not mean that I'm not listening.

You also wrote that, "we're supposed to believe that you're some big-time feminist and ally 'cause you think girls are so much cooler than guys but the reason you cite for liking us so much is that we 'don't want to beat you up.'" First, whether you believe I'm some "big time feminist and ally" or not isn't as important to me as the concept of whether or not we can find a way to help abusers change. In my first letter I felt it was important to give some personal background information to provide a context for my ideas. In Arwen's response to that letter she asked that I try to think about things from the perspective of the opposite sex. Therefore in my second letter I felt it necessary to give a little more background information on how a lot of my core beliefs were formed. I didn't originally intend to insert so much of my personal experience in the letters, but I do think it is helpful to show how I went from point A to point B and so forth.

As for the notion that I think that, "girls are so much cooler than guys" because they (girls) "don't want to beat me up." Perhaps I didn't state my intent clearly enough, but the point that I was trying to make is that at age six I noticed and appreciated the fact that the girls were less violent than the boys. The tenth grade was the last time members of my own sex were physically threatening me on a regular basis, so that isn't a distinction that I think much about these days. Whenever I think of my formative years I remember the distinction all too well. I was explaining this to illustrate the fact that from an early age I didn't experience the well-known rituals of male bonding. Getting harassed by members of my own sex did not make me want to associate with them. Therefore, to this day, I can actually relate better to Arwen than I can a guy like Rich. I have a bias and I admit it. Having acknowledged it, I also have to

realize that unless I can let go of some of that old anger I have towards those who mistreated me it will continue to cloud my interpretations of what happens today.

Finally, you wrote, "maybe I do wanna beat you up. After reading your letter I betcha a bunch of girls wished they could." I find it hard to believe that anything I've written in any of my letters is so inflammatory that a throng of *MRR*'s female readership is looking to kick my ass. If it is true, then maybe women are losing the distinction of being less violent than men. If you, at least, want to beat me up, then I'm afraid I've accomplished nothing here. I would have liked to have had an intellectual discussion (with Arwen, and now with you) about this subject without resorting to personal attacks. In theory, I believe that all three of us have the same goal, which is to reduce and maybe someday eliminate rape and sexual abuse. How to get to that day is where we differ. Branding me a "jerk" and saying you might "wanna beat me up" brings us no closer to that day, heals no victim, and reforms no abuser.

—Chris Peigler

Dear Chris—Well, I envy Arwen her foresight in ending her response with the "enough already" and freeing herself of the endless stream of Mackin related mail. I think it's important of course, and I'm glad this dialogue is happening. But who would've thought we'd still be going over it in the letters section all this time later?! Not me.

That said, I think your letter has many valid points and deserves a response. First and foremost, though you address this one item at a time, I think the real issue is that I was unnecessarily flippant in my response to your letter, and I apologize. I felt that Arwen's not at all flippant response covered that side of things and so I added a more emotion driven side. But since you read my statements more seriously than they were written, I will attempt a more serious response.

First and foremost, flippancy aside, my main critique was that whatever your claims to being pro-woman or girl power or whatever, your actions are what count and you're acting like a defensive male apologist. And I feel that that stands. You're not listening! *How many times do we have to say it?! "When I read this I hear this, when I read this I hear that…" You're quibbling with our interpretation of what's being said and what it means. But what I'm saying is that as a* woman, *this is how this sounds to me. This is what it communicates to us, as abuse survivors. Don't you get it? You don't get to tell us we're wrong because that isn't the point! There is no right or wrong when I say this is how this feels to me. And I say, and a bunch of other women have said, in the letters column of this very magazine, that when Sean writes "the least you can do is point to the spot on the doll where the bad man touched you," it is deeply offensive. You don't get to sit there and tell us that, no, we're just choosing to take that in the worst possible way and not giving him a chance. We don't think that that statement is a sign that he might be capable of being sexist and we're choosing to believe that he will be and not considering the chance that he isn't; these words, in this context, are, themselves, sexist. Printing that piece in a national publication is a problem, all on its own.*

You claim that you identify more with Arwen and myself than with Rich and Sean. It seems to me that, as a male, you identify with them to the extent that you feel threatened by our criticism of them, or you would not feel the need to attempt to defend their wording or to try to find something redemptive in an article which states, "you can't call kissing a breast or feeling up a woman who chooses to sleep in your bed sexual assault." This statement is deeply wrong. Period. There is no room for an alternative interpretation of this statement. Sleeping in someone's bed does not imply consent anymore than dressing in "suggestive" clothing does. The only thing that implies consent is—actual consent!

Yes, the story of the Jews who befriended the Klansman is very touching. Yes, if we all had the emotional resources to dedicate to educating our oppressors it could have a real impact for good in the world. However, as anti-racist organizers and queers and riot grrls and many others have been trying to tell people for years, it is not the responsibility of the oppressed to teach their oppressors. *Period. Why is this important? Because 1) we have other things to do, 2) it is an incredible drain of emotional energy and strength to engage in this sort of exercise for us, whereas for someone without the intense personal investment (other "oppressors") it is comparatively not such a big deal, and 3) oppression (sexism, racism, homophobia, whatever) are not our problem. The person with the problem that needs to be dealt with is not the victim, it is the racist, the rapist, the perpetrator. Yes, in real life, it becomes our problem, and in fact we have to educate people constantly, over and over, but we are not the ones who should have to deal with it. To put this in a more practical light, I shouldn't have to take on the project of educating the Rich Mackins of the world or those who defend them by dredging up my own long past wounds and trying to explain just exactly what it feels like to have a punk boy force himself on you just so they will become sensitive to women's issues. Instead, there should be men's groups and assaulters' groups where the people in them do not sit around telling each other why they are actually not so bad, and how all us women are just being nit-picky and choosing to see things in the worst possible light, but instead make a sincere and honest attempt to understand why they are being picked on, why someone would be moved to characterize them as macho or as jerks, and to take steps to change the behaviors which give rise to such accusations, while supporting one another through this difficult transition. (Not to mention supporting one another to acknowledge and deal with the defensiveness that is an inevitable part of this process and dealing with it rather than letting it be inflicted on the rest of us, who shouldn't have to deal with it or hear about it.)*

In closing—I don't believe in gender determinism. You are welcome to, of course, but I don't think that girls are less violent than guys or vice versa. I think that those who do see things this way are looking more at media representations of what a "man" or a "woman" is than at the world around them and the people they know. Just because our feelings manifest in different ways due to socialization does not mean our feelings are different. As we can learn from the transgender movement, gender is a social construct, not a blueprint for who we are. And as we can learn from feminism, turning ones anger and frustration inward, as is typical with those socialized as women, is no less a violent act than turning it outward.

And finally, thank you for your patience, everyone. The end.

—Anandi

Dept. of Corrections

In issue #255, The Reagan Issue, two credits were omitted.

The excellent, thorough, and very readable "Reagan A-Z Primer" was written by Mimi Nguyen. Thanks Mimi!

And, the New York scene report was written by Golnar Nikpour, who won't be writing any more of those for awhile, 'cause she's here in San Francisco now, to be the new *MRR* coordinator. Welcome to SF, Golnar!

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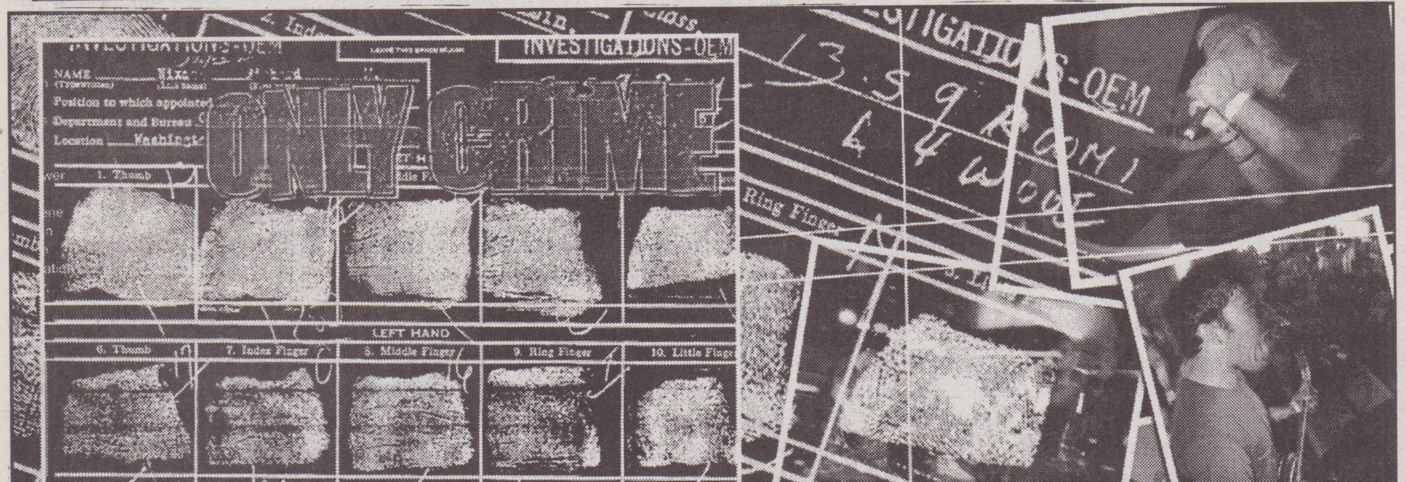

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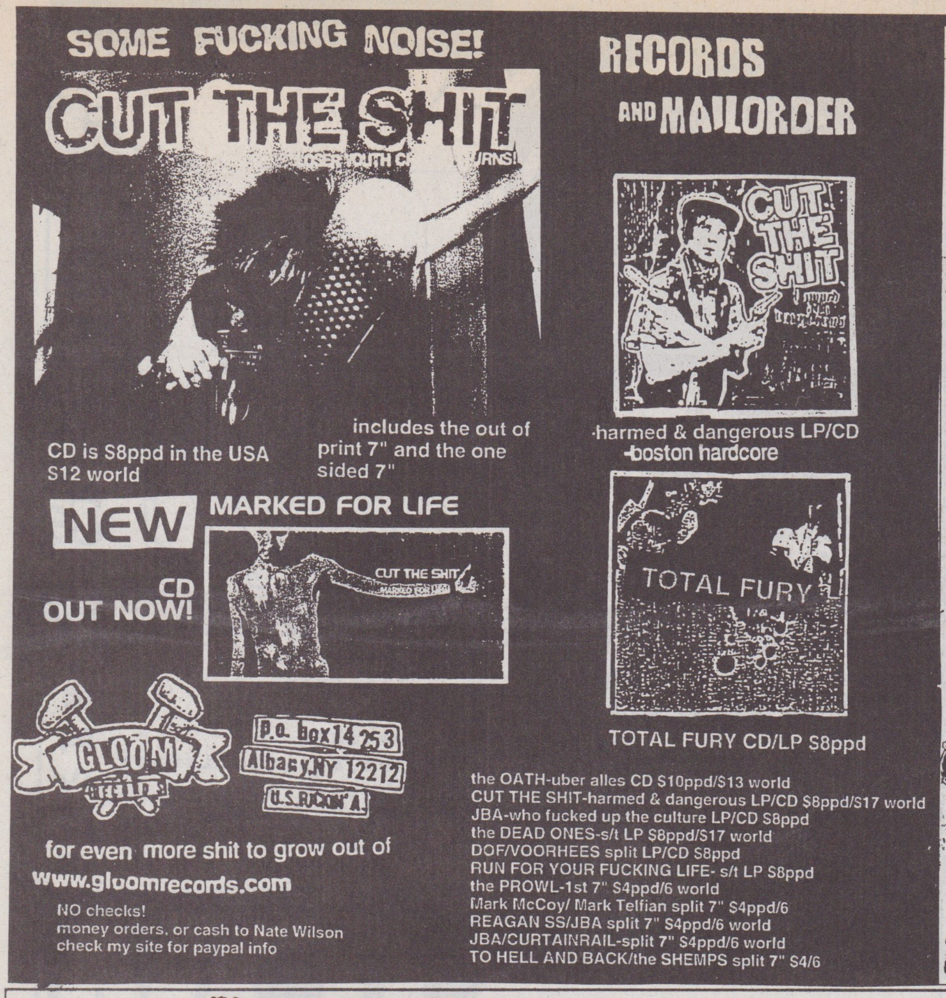

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4 Nashville
5th Cincinnatti
6th Philadelphia

SKITSYSTEM

www.skitsystem.net

August 28 Minneapolis, Thrash Fest 6
29 Des Moines, with Victims
30 Lawrence Kansas
31st Denver
Sept 1st Salt Lake City
3 Seattle
4 Portland
5 Berkely, Gilman St.
6 SF bay area
7 Los Angeles
8 San Diego
9 Phoenix
11 Dallas/Fort Worth
12 Austin
13 New Orleans
14 Brandon, FL
15 Daytona Beach
16 Savannah
17 Baltimore
18 NYC with Inepsy
19 Philadelphia w/Inepsy
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COLUMNS

M8 is a Queer Skin and Punk party in NYC promoted by Bejay Rose. I originally interviewed Bejay (before he got involved with M8) for an issue of HomopunkWorld fanzine, but this interview is to allow Bejay to express what he and his partners are attempting to accomplish with M8. Bejay is a fun guy and contrary to popular belief that all skins are white, racist, and straight …Bejay is black, *not racist*, and queer. You can read more about Bejay and M8 on these web pages.

http://hometown.aol.com/oiskinblu/fotopage3.html

http://hometown.aol.com/oiskinblu/oibiopage.html

MRR: What made you think about creating M8, and why'd you select it for a name?

Bejay: Well, I've always wanted to put together a party for skins and punx for a very long time, ever since I started managing Freaks (a skin/punk clothing store) on Saint Mark's Place in Manhattan, but I never had the time, being the buyer and the sales manager. So, it was just an idea I had frequently kept boasting about at the local bars. As you know now, I no longer run Freaks and I was looking into different work to do. My job offers were always techno parties. However, techno parties just don't cut it anymore. Being skinhead, and throwing techno parties, I felt really weird. Well, maybe in London, England it wouldn't be so weird. I hear a lot about those guys on Compton Street. So anyway, one day a friend asked "Hey Bejay there's a new skinhead party in NYC. Is it yours?" I said, "What are you talking about?" He then showed me a poster, and I was like; "Hey! That's what I always wanted to do. Who's throwing this?" I made some calls, did a search on the internet and I met up with a promoter Peter Sparrow and punk DJ from Chicago named Terrence aka Redbrace. So, in fact it was their party. And they came up with the name M8 (pronounced mate) which is what skins use as an abbreviation on the internet. Like Oi M8! Coincidentally, there's also a bus that runs near the Manhattan area called M8 too. So the guys invited me to their first M8. I liked it. We set a meeting up, and then they hired me for promotions for further M8 events.

MRR: When last I saw you, you were passing out flyers for M8 with a couple of your friends at a queer coffee shop called the Big Cup in Chelsea. Do you find that "Chelsea Queers" are reasonably open-minded to punk/skin events…or are they mostly stuck in the house music scene?

Bejay: "Chelsea Queers," that's funny. It just so happens that area is a good location for promoting. You get a good mixture of people passing that area, because of the trains, the gyms, and F.I.T (Fashion Institute of Technology) being not too far. "Chelsea Queers" as you call them, are opening up more because they are bored. I mean they're mostly robots and clones anyway. I think after a few cups of coffee at Big Cup, they suddenly become more alert to different things. But honestly the majority of our crowd does not come from that immediate area. Most of our crowd is found in bars, at skinhead shows, and mainly from the internet. Most of our crowd travel from Boston, Philly, Hartford, New Jersey, and the all the outer boroughs uptown.

MRR: If a Queer punk or Skin happened to go to an M8 event, what would be encountered there?

Bejay: They would have a good time for starters. The music is Oi!, punk and ska from a live deejay. The crowd is anxious, and invigorating, the space is usually in quite a burlesque and decadent setting. Everyone seems to enjoy M8, and keeps inquiring about the next one. We pull in a straight crowd as well, because everyone's invited, it's no secret society. All the clothing stores, tattoo & piercing shops and record shops are invited too.

MRR: Yeah I know. The shops sometimes set up little booths at M8 events. At one M8 event I went to there was a skin selling t-shirts, giving haircuts, and polishing boots. But what's this about straight people? I didn't imagine that some of these people at a queer punk and skin party might be straight. Does that get confusing?

Bejay: Sometimes it gets a little confusing. I mean skinheads are very masculine guys, so it's kinda hard to tell who's who sometimes.

MRR: How did you first gain experience in promoting events, and what is different about promoting M8 compared to other events you've done?

Bejay: I first started promoting early when smart drinks came out. It was for some industrial parties on the lower east side. Then I started building up my name, and a unique following and it went into outlaw parties, and raves at big night clubs like Limelight, Tunnel, Sound Factory, Twilo and Exit.

MRR: What's been your happiest moment at an M8 event, so far?

Bejay: Besides meeting gay skinheads who are really into Oi! Punk and ska music, and not bullshit pop music or just the skinhead 'look,' I'd have to say it's been a really cool lion's den for all of us in the tri-state area, and hopefully the whole east coast someday.

MRR: M8 fairly recently had to relocate from The Eagle (a legendary gay-male leather bar.) You mentioned something about how The Eagle, were "not happy with the music." Could you explain a little bit more about this?

Bejay: M8 started at Eagle on Thursday nights, which was one of the slower nights. The Eagle was a little wary about the mixing of their established crowd with a skinhead crowd. They were also a little confused about the term "skinhead." *You don't mean fagbashing Nazis?* No. *Fetish Nazis?* No. I mean traditional ska, punk, and Oi music loving skinheads…but gay. We even had a dress code for a bit as a guideline so people wouldn't show up in suits and or flip flops. You'd be surprised what curious "Chelsea Queers" would wear to voyage into the M8 parties. We had a base crowd in which we didn't have to worry about dress code. But the venue has two floors. The regular crowd was upstairs, and the M8 crowd was

downstairs. The music was pumped all throughout the whole venue though. So those Chelsea queers were like, "What's with this music? It's too hardcore." The complaints started building up. By New Year's Day we did a live band M8 event. We booked the ZOMBIE VANDALS, X-POSSIBLES, and SEX SLAVES. There was a chance we could've gotten a really known skinhead Oi! band CRIMINAL CLASS USA. Unfortunately, bad weather and bad timing kept us from going through with it. So basically this event drew out a mostly heterosexual punk crowd. But we finally established the name to all of the homosexual skin & punk crowd. The venue made a lot of money that night, but it could not handle the mixed crowd. Or should I say they *did not want to handle* the mixed crowd. The lead singer of the ZOMBIE VANDALS snorted a bag of glue in front of the stage next to the club manager. That instantly got them thrown out, and M8 was fired from being at Eagle ever again. That's why we moved M8 to Pussy Cat Lounge, a strip club in Tribeca. This time it's just Peter Sparrow and myself doing promotions without Terrence, aka DJ Redbrace. We booked our first local queer punk band show with THE DEAD BETTIES.

MRR: What are some songs and bands you are likely to hear the DJ play at M8?

Bejay: My most favorite is Oi! singalongs personally. But you're most likely to hear "Harry May" by THE BUSINESS, "Blood and Whiskey" by the DROPKICK MURPHYS, "Oi Ain't Dead" by CONDEMNED 84, 'For The Punx' by the CASUALTIES, and songs by AGNOSTIC FRONT, PRINCE BUSTER, THE SELECTOR, BAD MANNERS, and some Oi! out of Germany like LOIKAMIE or punk like OXYMORON.

MRR: What has been the most troublesome or problematic aspect of M8? (If any?)

Bejay: The only problematic situations occurring is never breaking even at the door, or just getting a guaranteed steady night. A few threats were rumored by skin gangs but it's nothing serious like bomb threats or terrorism.

MRR: Do you ever fear that there are not enough punk queer types to be able to sustain an event like this, or is that the point? Is your goal the conversion of mainstream queers into queer skins and punks...or not?

Bejay: The punk-queer type is a small scene regardless. The punk scene in NYC is kind of small too. But you never know with these things. Sometimes you think the scene is small then all these people come out their houses. We try to get as much support from around the globe, not just NYC, or the east coast, which is why the internet is vital to us. As far as converting mainstream queers, they will never really be able to handle it. That's why they're mainstream and we are not. I mean I own a Merc suit but it doesn't mean I am trying to fit in with the businessmen on Wall Street.

MRR: Sometimes...Skins and Punks don't necessarily (shall we say) mix well. Do the same frictions ever exist between *queer* skins and punks? Or do you find they blend rather easily at M8?

Bejay: I noticed that. I noticed skins will be skins and punx will be punx. They're all there at M8. But skinheads still tend to talk to the skins more than to the punx. I notice the punx being like whatever's clever, let's get drunk and have a good time. It takes a while for the crowd to relax and just get along, which is taken to a new level by having skin and punk male and female strippers added to this party. Everyone just has a good time, and remembers it's about enjoying your life. We do have dykes, lesbians too by the way, and will book bands that are all female. M8 is open to it all.

MRR: What sort of future do you foresee for M8? What sort of goals do you have in mind for it?

Bejay: Well, I am partners with Peter Sparrow. So I just am going with the flow. It's kind of like raising a kid or a pet. You just keep feeding it, and taking care of it. But you never know how it's going to grow up into. Except with a party it could just end and just be an old memory. God forbid though. It's just starting to kick ass again.

I was sitting in the leopard print tattooed face guy's tattoo shop in Austin, hanging out with an old friend who I had not seen in ten years since her band last played at ABC NO RIO, while her husband got tattooed. We were sipping on Tecate, while making plans to go to the house show pre-Prank Fest show, when Jenny came back inside post-phone call and said "Reagan's Dead"—everyone whooped and yelled and carried on. Always one to check into rumors before getting carried away I did the first thing that came to mind, and called Mike Thorn at the *MRR* HQ, who to my surprise said he was having the best day of his life, because Reagan was dead. With that confirmed, I gloated about being in off-the-hook Austin and said my column was going to be late whilst living the punk rock chaos. Well it was so late, it didn't even get written that month. So a month later, I retell the story.

We headed over to the show at Texas James' house and I saw a sea of the black clad punks milling about the yard. As happens whenever I see that sight, I feel comfortable and like I'm walking into a familiar environment that will be full of friends. But then there is that moment of pause where I realize I'm in a strange city at a strange house and while everyone might look like I should know them, I might in fact, not know a soul. But that was surly not the case as the first group of folks I came upon were all good friends—one from Minneapolis, one from Portland, and a couple from New Jersey, and then I felt right at home in the sea of the punks, as it should be. With some comfort level attained, and more Tecate passed around we ventured inside to see Born/Dead play and there was a big banner in the living room that said "Happy Dead Day Ronald" and it seemed the perfect start to an off-the-hook punk chaos weekend. Born/Dead fucking rocked and I was so stoked to see them I probably could have gone back home right after and been somewhat content, but that was only the beginning of much more punk rock chaos to come.

Austin is a crazy partying sorta town that had so much going on in that one weekend, that 500 or so punks didn't even make a dent into the state wide biker convention of 40,000 and the Gay Pride weekend that was also happening simultaneously. The bikes alone were a sight and sound to vibrate the whole city, and with Emo's right in the heart of the bar district where half the bikers were gathered on Saturday night, well it was almost too much, in a good way of course.

Prank Fest was a fucking blast. The show was outside, there were record distros set up in stalls and there were hundreds of people from all over congregated together there, loads of old friends for me to catch up with, as well as the regular traveling bands and crew that show up everywhere for these spontaneous, or well planned gatherings which are just as much

of a punk family reunion, excuse to all get together and socialize, as much as anything else. I could not help but think, "So, where are we all going to go next month?" The answer being of course—Philadelphia! What I really liked about being Austin, besides the obvious fact that it's a pretty cool city and the glamour of a place is always that much stronger during one of these big punk get-togethers, was that I was in a different state from my usual travels, and there were a lot of people that I have never met that I've only exchanged letters with and well, it was just really cool to get saturated in the punk mecca of a totally different part of the country that still felt welcoming and homelike because of the nature of the event.

So Prank Fest itself? Fucking brilliant. Great bands all around. Signal Lost, Born/Dead, Artimus Pyle, Sunday Morning Einsteins, Drop Dead, Kylesa, World Burns to Death and Paintbox were the personal highlights for me. And the pre-shows before the shows both nights were awesome bonuses with a blowout party or two smacked into the late night hours in between. Virginia rounded up a crew of punks to go canoeing through some awesome park in the middle of the city, which sounded amazing, but I opted out for the sure to be dry option of my favorite other pastime—the bookstore. Definitely a hard choice for me to make—enjoying the outdoors or the bookstore? An impossible choice really, but when I have a mere 42 hours to do it all, something has to be sacrificed I suppose. I would have loved to see the kings and queens of punk rowing about in the canoes though, let me tell you. Now should I really refer to anyone as a king or queen of punk? Isn't that probably some totally inappropriate reference? Well it's just another way of me saying—the punk as fuck punks all charged up, spiked, studded and dreaded. And anytime the punks get off the concrete and into any sort of natural eco-setting, even a city park, well I'm stoked.

As always it is hard to have these manic amazing weekends come to an end and have to say good-bye to everyone you don't to see near often enough. But I had to catch an early flight back home to go straight to work the next day, which was clearly a dumb plan to have made, but sometimes in the manic moment I don't these things out so clearly. If I would have, I'd of stayed for a week and actually gotten to experience the city like Jeremy did. But alas, another time. Richmond called me back where I finally ended up crashing from six weeks of non-stop living the punk rock chaos manic mayhem. And now that I think I'm recovered, it's time to rev it all back up a few notches, get a new issue of Slug & Lettuce done, which will likely have to be an all photo issue just based on all the bands I've seen in the past 2 months. And then as soon as that is done it'll be off to Philly for the Pointless fest where so many more amazing bands (like Hellshock!) will play while the punks gather once again. So then where are we all going to go next?

Another Month, Another Column

Sigh. I am not going to lie. I am exhausted as hell. I can't remember the last time I got a good night's sleep. Between working like a dog on the weekdays, and going to shows and maintaining the majority of my band's responsibilities on the weekends, I am seriously running myself into the ground. I need a break. This month's column deadline couldn't have come at a worse time. But it's has to get done. Otherwise the 30 people that read this every month would be bummed. To make things even more hectic, tomorrow I am squeezing myself into a car with four other dudes at the buttcrack of dawn to head down South for the weekend to see INSTED, THE FIRST STEP, and STAND & FIGHT. The weekend following that OUR TURN is flying out to Pennsylvania to play Posi Numbers. A strange mix of incredible excitement and fear of overwhelming exhaustion has been dwelling up inside me for the last couple weeks. This Summer is either going to make or break me. Sigh…it's trying times like these that test a man's spirit. Hahaha, who I am kidding?! I get to see INSTED and THE FIRST STEP play on the same stage tomorrow! And then my band gets the *honor* of playing with some of the best hardcore bands going right now, in front of hundreds of kids that have never seen us. And it's worth every fucking sleepless night and grueling workday. Hardcore rules, OK?

The Music, the Message

After a solid demo, HAVE HEART is finally coming out with their debut 7" entitled *What Counts* on Think Fast! Records. I just listened to their title track off the Think Fast website, and it's really good. They still posses some of the qualities that remind me a lot of CHAMPION. This particular song isn't as melodic, but it's still jam packed with a ton of different riffs and transitions. You can check these guys out at: www.thinkfastrecords.com.

Speaking of CHAMPION, I would recommend listening to "The Truth" mp3 (from their upcoming LP entitled *Promises Kept*) on the Bridge 9 website. I could never quite understand the interest in this band up until now. Their previous releases never quite did it for me. Described by many as a "youth crew" band, I always thought this band sounded a hell of a lot more like BANE. Regardless, the singer finally found his guts, and the music is much more straight up and true to form. If the rest of their LP is this fast and intense, it might just become my favorite LP of the year. Not like they need my support. Check out "The Truth" at www.bridge9.com.

For those of you who have not heard, INTERNAL AFFAIRS has just signed to Martyr Records. Besides recently releasing the split 7" with the Bay Area's own ALLEGIANCE on Rival Records, they are slated to record and LP soon.

Jeff *Start Today* is trying his hand at the DIY record business. He is currently looking for bands to be on his label entitled Bottled Up Records. He has just released the ONE UP demo on 7", and will soon be doing the same for the HAVE HEART demo. If you are in a band that plays fast solid hardcore, I would recommend that you email Jeff at bottledupre-cords@comcast.net. If his label turns out to be anything like his zine, then I would expect awesome things.

What's happening with My War Records? Well for starters, they are putting out a STREET TRASH LP entitled *Into the Wasteland*, as well as a 10 song 12" by VIOLENT MINDS called *Eyes of Death*. Both bands rule, so don't sleep on these. They will also be co-releasing the FIT FOR ABUSE *Mindless Violence* record as a 12" with extra bonus tracks. If you don't own the 7" version, get this. If you already own the 7" version, get this. I seriously can't get enough of this band. In related news, KNIFE FIGHT just got back from a tour in Europe. Apparently some of the crowds over there were expecting a tough guy shtick, and KNIFE FIGHT didn't deliver. Not sure what led them to believe that. However, I am sure Westbrook can be one mean mofo if put into the right situation. I'm not really sure what said situation would entail, but he looks like a scrapper in that flannel. Hehehe. Anyway, check

out their no frills website at www.knife-fight.org. Great new shirts by the way.

These are all the updates for now. I am tired, and I have a very long weekend ahead of me. Time to get some sleep. Goodnight!

Please send original copies of the LIFES BLOOD and CITIZENS ARREST 7"s to: Carl Cordova, 746 Baker Street, San Francisco, CA 94115, ih8thekids@hotmail.com.

In the fall of 2002, fewer than a third of Americans believed that Iraq posed a threat to the United States. So George W. Bush developed a strategy for selling a war to a recalcitrant public. In statement after statement, Administration officials created the impression that Saddam Hussein was responsible for the September 11 attacks.

Their plan worked. By the time American tanks rumbled across the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border, 70 percent of Americans thought we were avenging 9/11.

A year later, the 9/11 Commission has concluded there is "no credible evidence" of a Saddam-Al Qaeda link. Accused of lying about an Iraqi role in 9/11 as well as WMDs, Republicans are making a startlingly Orwellian defense: Bush & Co., they say, never said what we all heard them say.

"The press wants to run out and say there's a fundamental split here now between what the president said and what the (9/11) commission said," complains Dick Cheney. "And there's no conflict. What they were addressing was whether or not (the Iraqis) were involved in 9/11. And there they found no evidence to support that proposition. I've watched a lot of the coverage on it and the fact of the matter is (the press) don't make a distinction. They fuzz it up."

Someone's been fuzzing like a madman, but the media has merely been taking dictation. In a weasely it-depends-on-the-meaning-of-is way, the Bushies are absolutely right. They never said that Saddam was behind 9/11. Not exactly.

On March 21, 2003, days before the start of war, Bush sent a letter to Congress justifying the imminent invasion: "I have also determined that the use of armed force against Iraq is consistent with the United States and other countries continuing to take the necessary actions against international terrorists and terrorist organizations, including those nations, organizations, or persons who planned, authorized, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001."

But on June 16, 2004, Bush said: "This administration never said that the 9/11 attacks were orchestrated between Saddam and Al Qaeda." Sam Boone-Lutz wrote a letter to the editor of *The New York Times* pointing to these two statements. "Explain to me," he asks, "how (the June 16, 2004) statement isn't a lie."

This is your lucky day, Sam.

Parsing statements from the current White House is impossible without a strong background in sentence diagramming. (A shout-out here to Mr. Bradfield, my old-school seventh-grade English teacher.) The key word in Bush's March 21, 2003 justification to Congress is *including*. He asserts that armed force is justified "against international terrorists and terrorist organizations." Everything after "including" is optional, i.e., non-conditional. Broken down to its essentials, Bush said: "I can go after terrorists, *including* those responsible for 9/11, but I can also go after terrorists who were not responsible for 9/11." Given the context—a notice to Congress that he is about to attack Iraq—he intended us to draw the inference that Iraq played a role in 9/11. But, strictly speaking, he doesn't say that Iraq is *included* among those who carried out 9/11. His statement has been carefully lawyered to create "plausible deniability" if and when, as has happened, such an assertion is belied by the facts.

Bush does clearly assert, however, that Iraq is tied to "international terrorists and terrorist organizations." This section relates to payments Saddam made to survivors of Palestinian suicide bombers who died in attacks in Israel—not the United States. If the average American knew in March 2003 that Iraq had only been involved in terrorism against Israel, but never against the United States or any other country, he wouldn't have viewed Saddam as a threat. Bush "fuzzed up" the differences between referring specific terrorism against Israel and terrorism in general, hoping that no one would notice the difference.

No one did.

White House lawyers applied similar legalese to every official pre-war statement so that, when the truth eventually came out, Bush & Co. could deny having tied Saddam to 9/11. Ordinary citizens, who quickly scan the headlines and get their news from TV, would draw the desired—incorrect—conclusion. Yet "plausible deniability" was in place as a future defense.

Any news junkie with some experience reading legal documents can extract the elusive truth from a Bush quote. On June 17, for example, Bush said that Saddam had "provided safe haven for a terrorist like (Al Qaeda leader Abu Musab) Zarqawi, who is still killing innocents inside of Iraq." Actually, Zarqawi never lived in Saddam's Iraq; he arrived after the US invasion. But a guy Bush says is *like* Zarqawi, Palestinian terrorist Abu Nidal, did live in Baghdad under Saddam. To the extent that any Abu is like another, Zarqawi is *like* Nidal. (In this phrasing, "like" typically means "for example." In order to obfuscate, however, Bush will claim to have meant "similar to.") Yes, Nidal's Fatah organization was only a threat to Israel, never the United States. And Zarqawi's Islamist Al Qaeda never cooperated with Yassir Arafat's Fatah.

This statement elevates the craft of creating intentionally confusing syntax to dazzlingly cynical new heights. Polls confirm that such convoluted verbiage has convinced a plurality of Americans, 49 to 36 percent, that "clear evidence that Iraq was supporting Al Qaeda has been found."

It's all so beautifully postmodern: all of the Bushies' lies are true. Technically.

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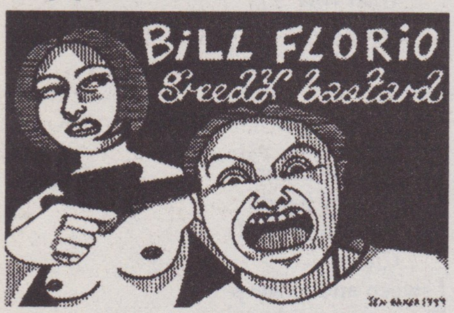
NEW BOOK: *Wake Up, You're Liberal! HowWe Can Take America Back From The Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pp., price $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. It includes advice to the broad spectrum of the American left from anarchists and socialists to mainline Democrats on everything from personal attitudes to TV campaign ads and choosing candidates, as well as proposes a new kind of Democratic Party based on a platform that I believe would be unbeatable. Based on three years of research and a lifetime of thought, this is my political magnum opus. You can order it directly through Soft Skull (softskull.com) or Amazon, or ask your bookstore to order it. If you want an autographed copy send $19

(includes Priority Mail within the United States) to Ted Rall, PO Box 1134, New York NY 10027 and be sure to say how you want me to sign it.

NEW BOOK 2: *Generalissimo El Busho: Essays And Cartoons On The Bush Years* (NBM Publishing, 208 pp., $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. It collects the best of my writing and cartoons since Generalissimo El Busho seized power in a judicial coup d'état in 2000. You can order it from any bookstore or get it signed directly from me. For a signed copy send $24 for the hardback (includes shipping in the U.S.) or $20 for the paperback.



Had a lot of run ins with douche-bags this month, the names have been changed because I didn't know any of their names. So, the 5678's come to town, they emailed Squeaky Shemp about us helping them play a cosmetics store opening. Invitation only, blah blah blah, we're gonna get paid a hundred bucks each and party with the beautiful people. The company is probably paying them enough to cover their plane tickets over here so they can do some shopping.

So we start with douche-bag evening number 1. Ok, at this show I expected only people who know the 5678's as that band in *Kill Bill.* Which is ok, I mean, who gets invited to something like this?? Who is so important that Shu Uemura Corporation needs to have them at their SoHo store opening? It's so funny how things in this world work. I've been going to punk shows more than half of my life and weird people don't show up at punk shows. The really weird people show up to non-punk shows. When you go to a punk show, sure some people may dance somewhat aggressively and yell things at the band, maybe they dress slightly off and have one or two more tattoos than chicks at a beauty salon, but all in all most of the crowd at most punk shows are nice normal acting people. Once you cross the line and you go to a different sort of thing, anyone can crawl out of the woodwork. I notice this most when it's a holiday show, like New Years Eve, or like when Joey Ramone used to have a Birthday show where the door was double the normal price, and I'd find myself the only normal punk rock schmuck who paid it because I wanted to see THE DICTATORS and RONNIE SPECTOR.

Oh yeah, wow I'm starting another paragraph now and I never even finished the 5678's cosmetics party. So, Yoshiko and Co. show up at 4 pm while me and Squeaky are setting up my portable PA system and we run a little sound check. Just so you know, I did buy a PA on my credit card, but I'm not very good at using it. I can't figure out how to stop feedback when the music stops, so I decide I'm just gonna sit with the mixer and turn it up and down while they play. So around 8pm the real freaks start lining up. The 5678's got ridiculously made up while me and squeaky ate Vietnamese food. When we get back there's a tent and a velvet rope on the sidewalk. I get to try out my new cell phone jammer, which is a wonderful time. At one point I knock out three yuppies phones at once while they all stand next to each other staring at their screens wondering why they have no signal anymore all of a sudden. There's some guy with Technicolor vinyl pants from Nobu making sushi and free booze, and some of the ugliest, strangest people I've ever seen. I mean, for chrissakes it's a makeup company! Can't they invite at least one nice looking person? So, I'm standing behind a velvet rope and these three scary Transsexuals start lifting their legs like dogs near a fire hydrant and start coming towards me. I mean, this is scary. One has her fake boobs totally hanging out of her dress where the nipples are pointing at me like some sort of secret weapons out to destroy me and my mixing board. (Margo recognized this one as Amanda Lepore, my girlfriend is up on her freaks). Anyhow the Blonde Monkey one was hired to introduce the band. I guess she's famous for getting the most plastic surgery to look like some sort of monster movie. So the girls play a good set for an unworthy audience, the guy in charge wearing a purple suit cuts 'em a check, some stupid girl goes up to Yoshiko and says, "You guys are fierce!" and we're excited to see them play a real show the next night.

Ok, we get to the big club on Wednesday and find out the show has been sold out for a week. I guess being in a hit movie actually does work. No big deal, we got there early and were on the list. So, during the 5678's set there were about twenty or so really stoned obviously eighteen year old lesbians. Hey, nothing wrong with that, I mean, yeah I know they wouldn't have been there if they didn't see the movie, but the 5678's totally got their friends bands to play and they seemed into Sato 'n Jonny who happened to be great that night. So, yeah they were drunk/high and loud, but hey so are a lot of my friends. So when the band started playing they changed pace a little, they started shoving people (especially guys around them) and then violently making out with each other. My first thought was, wow not only are these girls kinda dumb, they also have no fucking clue. Margo got to the other side of me because her ass was being grabbed. I just tried to pretend they no longer existed. I mean it's always weird when you see people at shows that have never been to a real show. It was obvious that these women had only been to Warped Tour/Madison Square Garden type venues where the crowd is all about grabbing people's asses speaking with potty-mouths and violently shoving strangers around. But, this was just a regular show with a regular garage band. The most you usually see happen is some people hold their beers up and yell "Woooo!" Sometimes that annoying South American guy will fall drunkenly on people, but it's usually pretty damn mellow and silly. I think if I saw these girls at a Blink 182 show, I'd have some respect for their sticking together and not letting anyone fuck with them for being speed-freak-making-out-lesbians, but at this show I was very unimpressed. (Wait a minute, why the hell would a lesbian go to Blink 182? And why would I be there watching them? So fuck that theory too)

Then Squeaky decided to say something to them, the only problem is that he lost his voice a couple of months ago for no good reason. So he tapped a particularly belligerent one on the shoulder and she cockeyed him (obviously not being able to hear him) she suddenly turned angry and started talking back to him all slurred and surly. So, then Dave the Spazz (who's not exactly someone you'd want to mediate anything) chimes in with something like, "I think you need to calm down" and the girl jumps at his throat. So I had to jump in and set her straight, "Hey, I don't know why you're screaming at my friend… But we are all just trying to watch the band, could you go outside and fight with people for no

reason?" I was smiling as I said this, and I usually am able to make angry drunken violent people calm, I don't understand the power I possess but no one has punched me in the face for it, since the 1980s. Tho' someone did throw a bottle, but I was just playing bass, maybe I hit a bad chord or something

Anyhow, just so all you pseudo punk/pseudo lesbians know, all of the 5678's songs are about how they wanna get with a boy, if they even get that sociopolitical and most of 'em are covers at that. Also, it sort of degrades all girl bands that people like this will just go because it's an all girl band. I mean, the 5678's are great, but if people are gonna show up just because they are wearing sparkly evening gowns they could probably sound like THE CASUALTIES and you'll see the same warped-tour-sleater-kinney-losers show up and pay admission and buy a t-shirt anyhow. I think in the last year I've written my theories on festival shows cheapening the punk scene and making it impossible for a touring band to play anywhere except pizza places and dank small basements to no one except zine nerds bent on punk rock nostalgia.

Anyhow, there are a lot of bands that have climbed their way up the stupid festival/package tour ladder. I mean, everyone's so snobby. I challenge one of these bands that can draw 500plus people in every city to go back and do a real tour. Four local bands on every show. This is how the punk scene gets rejuvenated, this is the kind of thing that bands that have gotten to such a level needs to do to retain their integrity. You all sing about how the power elite is fucking you in some way, did you ever consider whatever you're schtick is musically has no real bearing in the world? That touring with two other bands on your label may be good for business, but it's just a traveling circus and it only takes away from the local punk scene. The 5678's are not very punk rock musically, but as part of Japanese culture, they chose picking local bands to open for them over demanding a high guarantee, they knew playing with them at the height of their popularity would only help the whole music scene and in turn make sure people will come back to see them next year when the dyke mall punks forget who they are. I don't think it's too much to ask for popular punk rock bands to do the same.

Anyhow feel free to write me bill@candids.com and add the SHEMPS to yer myspace account in between picking up bored sixteen year olds.

Ten-Speed

My friends, I am on fire. Black and red and gold ribbons on my bike handlebars stream backwards in the wind as I downshift into low gear, cruising fast and furious down an asphalt river cutting through the city. I travel at the speed of my legs and arms, spinning wheels against the stone, feeling free, enjoying the sun on my face.

There is simply too much to tell. In a few hours, I'll be gone on tour again. This time, to the CLIT festival in Minneapolis, which I'm really looking forward to. I haven't even started to pack and it's almost morning. The past few days have been a blur of protests, video, shows and hanging out with friends. And even taking over the streets with Critical Mass, something I haven't done before. I've been recruiting and training a video team, getting ready to cover street actions and social justice events for cable access. Things are happening, and the energy is high as we all wonder what is going to happen during the national conventions of the Democrats (the Lesser Evils) in Boston and the Republicans (the Really, Really Evils) in New York City.

Everything now is building steam, gathering momentum, but by the time this is published, the Democratic National Convention in Boston will have come and gone. And I'll be back from tour! So, next month I will report on media in the streets and all the kick ass raging bands.

For now, I leave you with a poem. Yes, a poem. This month, I have found the writings of Langston Hughes, and his words sing with my heart. I first fell in love when I read a few scribbled words of his, scribbled onto the wall of the bathroom of AS220 in Providence. What a day! Not only did I get to see BEHIND ENEMY LINES for the first time, but I was also struck by a pen.

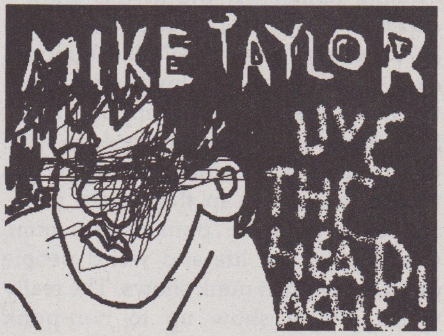
I find the poems of Langston Hughes cut through the bullshit. He takes aim at the cloud of racism and class that hangs over this country like a poisonous fog, pointing to the boils on the face of smiling "liberty." He wrote and published through the 1920s, up until the 1960s. What a time frame! I am now the proud owner of his collected poems, some 700 pages in all. This is from his last work *The Panther & the Lash*. I personally recommend standing up, reading the poem out loud, and then screaming into the wind. Until next month –Erika.

War

The face of war is my face.
The face of war is your face.
What color
Is the face
Of war?
Brown, black, white–
Your face and *my* face.

Death is the broom
I take in my hands
To sweep the world
Clean.
I sweep and I sweep
Then mop and I mop.
I dip my broom in blood,
My mop in blood–
And blame you for this,
Because you are *there,*
Enemy.

It's hard to blame me,
Because I am here–
So I kill you.
And you kill me.
My name,
Like your name,
Is war.



Hot Topics for Summer 2004

1.Ugh, the fucking *crusades.* So last month the U.S. pulled out of Iraq, spilling sperm all over the stomach of the decimated country. Bring on the shadows, the next waves of civil war and political assassination.

2. The Rwandan genocide tribunal is operating on a shoestring in efforts to bring to justice perpetrators of the 1994 Tutsi massacres because certain key UN

members, namely Japan and the US, aren't coughing up proposed funds. Now, it's a given that these trials are a bit of a show. How can you bring a faceless wave of violence to justice? You can't try a whole country. However, a decade ago the US showed a lack of concern or spine and sat by while nearly 800,000 Rwandan Tutsis were hacked to death by their neighbors. Now, the government's only conciliatory gesture has been revealed as the empty one it is. Meanwhile, Colin Powell visits Sudan to just, you know, check out whether we should call their current strife "genocide," because under UN code, we can do something about it if it's, you know, *real genocide*. And we all know how seriously the Bush administration takes the UN and its semantics.

3. I saw *Fahrenheit 9/11* last week. I'd like to think that Quentin Tarentino and the rest of the Cannes Film Festival gave it Highest Honors to insure major domestic distribution, because it's an important film. Plus, Lionel Ritchie sat behind me at the theater. He and like thirteen washed up *Kids Incorporated* looking showbiz gooches reserved an aisle, with Lionel in the middle. Like anybody gave a fuck about goddamn Lionel Ritchie.

4. Listen, Florida friends, *vote!* It's an important state. I'm still registered down there, so if you live in Gainesville, you can vote twice, once as me.

5. Since the Colorado River is drying up and life on the West Coast won't exist outside of rich metropolitan areas in a few years, it's a smart idea to start being really nice to me well in advance, so it won't be weird when you ask to come stay with me for a while.

6. Do you get, like, *really, really* blindingly angry when you think that this one lifetime we have is wasted trying to negotiate our ways through and around cops, governments, bosses, and senseless religions? Then there are debts, thoughtless lovers, lame parents, and bad drivers. Whoever made all the decisions back when, like before we were even born, thanks a fuck of a lot, assholes.

7. Thinking of going swimming this summer? Well, don't. All the water in the world is poison, and skin is a semi-permeable organ, not a force field.

8. I work in the library, at a desk where I come into contact with all sorts of random dudes and ladies. There's been way more soldiers than usual. They are young, and for the most part, quiet. They ask questions in the subdued way of those who are used to orders and have been under pressure. I'm reminded of reading that Valium is sold over the counter in Baghdad, to ease to stress of living in perpetual wartime, and that alcohol is a Christian drug for Christian troubles. Still, when I'm not face to face with these people, when I see them in parking lots and grocery stores, and all they are is a uniform walking, I think jackboots and machine guns and the unforgiving violence perpetrated on a nonaggressor nation, and everyone is *just doing their jobs.*

9. See the last sentence of #8.

10. I hope all of you in the Southeast took your chance to see Tiny Hawks if they came through your town recently. They are one of a small handful of bands currently playing that can be taken seriously as a hardcore band and sensible young people. Their talk is not the "we care" cartoon performance that degrades the form, and their sound is not a simple amalgamation of their current favorite records.

That's all for now.

PO Box 28226, Providence, RI 02908

It was one of those mornings when I'd drank too much coffee the day before and the night had engulfed me as sleep eluded me. I had a nightmare about a vicious dog—some sort of rott-based mutt, endlessly trying to attack me after it had sex with an old man. In order to avoid the rott's vicious jaws, I tied myself with a rope to a tall telephone pole/tree, like I was the dog, hanging and climbing higher. I felt real sad, like I was sick of feeling like a victim, why was I tethered instead of the dog? It was night, the branches hung low around me and there was a flickering artificial light that made the space seem like someone's city backyard.

And then I was in this enormous old bed with friends and family members and they all looked dead, like they were part of a haunted mansion and I was the spectator, the vacationer, the kid in the carnival. I went back to sleep in sheets of sandpaper and felt bug bites all on my skin. I got up and took a shower and then drank a beer in my pajamas. I tried to find some hydrocortisone cream, but the tube was empty; I used the wrench that we use to turn on the shower to squeeze the last dried bit out; I wondered why my throat was so sore, was I dying? Why was the right side so swollen, was something really wrong? I've been wondering this for years, but I continue on as though there were an afterlife and so losing this life would be no big fucking deal. I went back to sleep: more nightmares, more hours of laying there awake thinking that I should take that wretched energy and turn in into something tolerable, something beautiful the way we're taught we can—you know, art. Remembered that article I read in the paper that said that sad people were the best people in the world, the least likely to judge others from their perspectives, experiences, etc. Like your own sorrow, sometimes from a superficially illegitimate source, enables you to see the complexity of others' experiences and emotions.

I was thinking about that article and the news. About how everything went wrong last weekend, how it should have—it was the fucking Fourth of July. I missed the fireworks and at first, I was pissed off, but then I realized I was being disingenuous; I really didn't care. That Saturday, we went camping on the beach illegally, drank whiskey, discussed heartaches both older and recent, maybe someone went swimming in the ocean. I went to a far end of the beach and got sick. I did all I could to protect myself, keep from choking in my sleep—become another twenty-seven-year-old statistic. We left the beach when the water started to trap us in the cove and the tent I was borrowing from my neighbor who likes to surf got filled with water. I tried to drift off in the shotgun seat of the truck, and then later on in a bed in Berkeley, but I couldn't sleep it off. Tried to sleep again the next night but it didn't come, it wasn't going to. I just thought about the Swedish film we'd watched half of before passing out, a long disheveled narrative full of deadpan actors that looked like the undead, hating their jobs, pacing long corridors. A man who was an ex-furniture salesman yelling at his catatonic son that he'd written poetry until he'd gone mad. I loved the film because of that; I wish I'd make the time to write poetry until I go truly mad. These are the thoughts I hold onto in insomnia. And then there are all the books we'll never have time to read, all the halls we'll pace forever, and we'd left the beach early that night and everyone who didn't had to pay a fee, and

there have been quite a few signs that something is wrong with the world, and so we drink a little more, and we lose ourselves in each other, and the way we get through it all is sleep, but I couldn't get that right then, moved from poetry and madness to all of the jobs I was supposed to keep track of and my truck's smog test and parking permit. And who even gets to think about things like reading and writing, some real reasons to live—no, there has to be something more than all this.

I was driving home that day, trying to find some hope for the future in the ugly pissy world, listening to the news, and this chick came on the radio. Apparently, she'd been hired to relay the events of the day to me in a clear, concise manner. Riordan, California's secretary of the board of education, this guy who ran for governor over and over again, who ran early against Gray Davis in the runoff election that gave the jock to end all jocks the governership in this, the great state of California, had apparently suffered an unbelievable case of Tourette's Syndrome. He was at a PR event in a library, having a heart-to-heart with some preschoolers, and some little girl named Isis asked him if he knew that her name meant "Egyptian Princess." "No, your name means dirty, stupid, little girl," he said, in one of the oddest demonstrations of patriarchy I've heard in a long time. Man, we don't need hyperbole in this day and age, we don't need it cuz shit's so wild, so fucking postmodern, that why would we bother to lie?

Write to me c/o MRR. Keep drinking water.

"If I really knew how to write, I could write something that someone would read and it would kill them." —William Burroughs

POSITIVE EXAMPLE ONE: "Yaaiiii! Stop it!" she says, but she doesn't pull away. In fact, her naked body presses harder against mine.

My teeth bite into her shoulder. My fingernails scrape against her back. Skin curls under my nails like I'm scraping wax off a candle.

Her nails tear into *my* back. Long and red, they dig bloody furrows into my skin. The pain further hardens my already hard hardness now thrusting into her. Her teeth sink into my shoulder as my teeth answer with their own bite.

A trickle of blood mixes with the saliva in my mouth. In vampiric ecstacy, I drive onwards. Biting, scratching, thrusting. The pain takes over my entire being. We are nothing but the pleasure and the pain. There's a shudder. A soft scream escapes her lips against my shoulder. She pushes her pelvis hard against me. Holds it tight. And tighter.

Flash ahead. We've been separated for a week. She had to go to Italy for a photo shoot. I'm stuck in New York with *Inches* magazine.

"It's funny Mykel," she tells me when she returns. "My roommate Victoria thought we had a fight or something."

"What made her say that?" I ask. "Did you say something nasty about me?"

"No," she says. "Victoria said she thought you were mad at me because there aren't any new scratches on my body. My body was too healed. She figured there was something wrong."

NEGATIVE EXAMPLE ONE: I'm at a wedding in Charleston, South Carolina. My cousin once-removed, or my second cousin, I can't remember which one it is. It's a beautiful setting. On the beach, bride and groom are barefoot. The ocean laps, flashing white in the background. A grey-haired magistrate asks them if they will forever love, honor, and cherish one another.

Both agree, exchange rings, and kiss lightly. Later there's a party. Each of them assures us this marriage will be better than the previous one. This one will last.

POSITIVE EXAMPLE TWO: Flash back to 1976. I sit at The Bottom Line, a now-defunct club at the corner of Mercer and 4th Street.

The club is laid out like a cabaret. No dance space. Just a stage in front, with long tables running perpendicular to it. Behind the front tables is a raised area. This area has smaller and more intimate tables and chairs.

I'm at the far end of one of the long tables. At the front end sits a chubby guy wearing an ADIDAS t-shirt and a baseball hat. He's eating a chili burger. Next to him is a pretty girl with lots of dark curly hair. She wears a long-sleeve t-shirt and isn't eating anything. "Ask The Angels." The band stands unmoving behind her. Wearing torn jeans and a T-shirt with nothing printed on it, she holds a microphone. After the song she freezes, waiting for the applause to die down. Then she starts "Rock'n'roll Nigger".

Baby got a hand; Got a finger on the trigger, Baby, baby, baby is a rock-and-roll nigger... Outside of society, that's where I want to be, outside of society, they're waitin' for me!

"Wait!" she shouts at her band.

They stop.

"What's the matter with you people?" she says, facing us. "You're eating dinner? Is this McDonalds?"

"This isn't fuckin' McDonalds!" she yells, jumping from the stage onto the end of the table I'm at.

Her foot hits the Rolling Rock of the chubby guy, knocking the bottle onto his lap. He jumps up, as does the girl next to him.

"We're all rock'n'roll niggers!" she shouts. Advancing along the length of the table, she knocks over beer bottles as she walks. I grab mine and hold it off the table, but I don't stand up. She glares at me, turns around, and walks back toward the stage. On her way, she kicks the chubby guy's chili burger into his lap.

"You!" she points at some poor shlub, dressed like he just got out of work for an insurance company. He looks around like she's not talking to him.

"You!" she shouts again. "You're a rock'n'roll nigger."

Waitresses come to the table, bringing bar rags to clean the mess. A few people have left and moved toward the tables in the back. Others stand, wait for the waitress to finish cleaning up, then sheepishly take their seats again.

POSITIVE EXAMPLE THREE: I have a confession. A coming out of sorts. I like haiku. Not those stupid 5-7-5 things you learn in school or play with on the internet. Those aren't haiku. They're bullshit.

Good English haiku don't use 5-7-5. Good haiku are about nature. They have a season word. They're a flash of insight in a single moment. They don't use tricks to bring you to the moment. No metaphor. No simile. No rhyme. They're not thoughts, ideas, political statements. They just are.

Although I like haiku, I don't write them. I write a cousin of haiku called senryu. They have some of the same rules, except they're usually humorous, and don't need nature or a season word.

It's May 2004. Haiku and senryu writers from all over the world meet at Carleton University in Ottawa. I've driven up with friends from The City. We arrive late.

A greatness of haiku writers—and poets in general—is they always bring booze. When we arrive, spirits already flow like the mighty St. Lawrence. Two empty wine bottles look forlorn in the wastebasket. A half empty bottle of sake, as big as my arm, sits for sharing on a long table. Off to the side is a keg of Bubba Beer. (I shit you not!) Someone has cut the tops off a dozen beer cans to make drinking glasses.

Around the table sit writers, pens and paper out, booze of choice next to them. Ages range from a white-haired man in his early seventies, to a cute slightly pudgy young girl barely twenty. A bunch of soused haiku and senryu poets laugh, argue, drink.

This crew has some of the most famous haiku poets in the world. Here's Alan Pizzarelli, a modern beatnik who some claim single-handedly developed the American haiku. Over there is Cor Van Den Heuvel, editor of the *Norton Haiku Anthology*, the *Erotic Haiku* book, and master arbiter of haiku taste. It's academia up the wazoo. You'd expect it to be as thrilling as roadkill.

You'd be wrong.

Alan takes a last sip of sake, then slams his fist on the table in front of us.

"You!" he shouts, standing quickly. He points at Cor who, groggy, sits rather quietly at the table.

"You!" he shouts again. "You're destroying haiku. Haiku should have a moment. A time. A season word."

"That's right," says the older man. "You are right."

"Then why did you call your book *Erotic Haiku?"*

Without giving his elder a chance to answer, Alan answers for him. "You know that people know haiku! It's famous! A book called *Erotic Senryu* would never sell! You sold out to the publishers. You can call it what you want. But *it isn't haiku!."*

"Oh come on," says Cor. "It's not that important."

"Not that important???" shouts Alan, slamming his fist on the table. A half beer can of wine spills its contents helter skelter on the books and papers.

Pow! The guests slide back, stand up to keep from being wine-splattered. The plump girl I'm after shrieks in horror and slinks toward the back of the room. I stay where I am, at a safe distance from the mess, enjoying every second of it.

Cor tries to calm down the other drunken poet, but there is an edge of passion in his voice.

"Alan," he says, "we need to bring people to this stuff any way we can. I want to draw people to the idea of haiku. Even if we provide them with senryu at the beginning."

"No!" shouts the younger poet, climbing on the table. He stands like a toy soldier, arm outstretched, pointing. He slides one foot toward the man he's accusing. It knocks over the bottle of sake that in turn knocks over some of the cut beer cans.

"If you dilute haiku, you destroy it!" he continues, advancing along the tabletop, step by step, yelling as he walks. "Haiku is nature. It has a season word. It's a moment. It doesn't use metaphor or simile..."

His eyes bulge so far from the sockets I fear they'll fall out. Flecks of saliva spray from his mouth as he shouts.

"You want to destroy all that!"

I can see the concern in the older man's eyes. He has to decide between defending his works and saving the evening workshop.

"Ok, Alan," he says. "You're right. I made a mistake. I should have called it something else."

It doesn't work.

"Don't patronize me!" shouts Alan, stomping his foot on the table.

That does it. Every liquid-holding container overturns. Rivulets of beer, wine and sake run across the table, turning paper into paper maché, poems into abstract streaks of ink. Everyone stands. I get up and move toward the commotion. A few people leave. I hover closer, anxious to see what happens. And it does.

Alan loses his footing on the wetness. Down he crashes, hitting hard, hip first, on the table. A table leg bends. The alcohol rivulet becomes a river, running down the center of the table, spreading tributaries right and left.

Alan rolls off on to the floor. Pushing himself up with both hands, he staggers to his feet.

"And another thing..." he starts.

NEGATIVE EXAMPLE TWO: It's gay pride day. A celebration of the Stonewall riot, a fight of homos against cops. A bunch of outsiders vs. *the Man.* We celebrate the passion of bricks through cop car windows.

"Ho Ho Ho Chi Min! Ho Ho Homosexual!" they chanted, turning over police cars, turning Vietnam, homo freedom and the right to be different, into a mishmash of rage and joy on a hot summer night.

It's a different different in 2004. This year they have a permit. The real outsiders, like NAMBLA, are banned. Indignant letters from responsible gays keep TV news from concentrating on "the outrageous," marchers. They look like you and me, only cleaner and richer. A vendor sells gay flags to the on-lookers. The marchers call for the "right" to get married and be just like everybody else.

"Two, four, six, eight. Married life sure is great!" they chant.

There's not much "gays in the military" action this year. They don't need it. Since the start of the Iraqi War, homo discharges (there's a noun and adjective froth with meaning!) have reduced 39 percent. Homos are as qualified as anyone to kill innocent Iraqis! George and Donald agree. Don't you?

WHAT IT ALL MEANS: Haiku or punk or sex or politics. It doesn't matter. What matters is the passion. If you're not willing to climb on a table, I don't want to hear it. If you're going to be reasonable. Do it somewhere else.

Give me people who act unreasonably, who jump on tables, who turn over police cars. I look at the TV talking heads of the left and the right and want to see 'em explode. Like in *Scanners*. There's no passion there. No matter how right they may be.

I see a band, perfect musicians, playing on stage like they're perfect musicians and I want to throw up. Give me GG Allin, Peelander Z, World War IX.

I fuck a whore, a boy or a girl, who wants to try every trick in the Kamasutra. Step A, Step B, Step C. "Check this out, I can touch my ears with my heels."

I'd rather jerk off.

Give me someone who leaves marks. I want to fuck like I riot. I want wounds on my body. I want hickeys, scratches, bruises. I want to come out a different person than I went in. I want it to hurt. To feel the passion. That's what living is about. Everything else is just hanging around.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers to this column (email to: god@mykelboard.com) may receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

—>*Flying 1984 Airlines Dept:* The US Transportation Security Administration is distributing a "No-Fly" list to airlines. They compile the list using information from the FBI, CIA and credit card agencies. If you match a nastiness profile, they'll stop you. Another search, another walk through the x-ray, if you're lucky. If you're not, they won't let you board the

plane. You match the profile and that's all there is to it.

Besides being an incredible infringement on the right to privacy, the right to defend yourself, the right to correct misinformation, and the right to avoid self-incrimination, it is also 100% stupid.

What terrorist is going to fly under her own identity? Al Quaieda can plan a perfectly coordinated attack on the Pentagon, but it can't forge ID papers??????? Sometimes even I am amazed at the stupidity of the people who control my life.

—>*500% What a Deal! Dept:* Kesha sent me info about a new system of "Pay Day Loans" where you can borrow money the week before payday. You pay it back when you collect your salary. The annual interest rate is around 500%. It's a great success!

Illegal in New York and Massachusetts where interest rates limits are set at 25%, the rest of American can and does take advantage of this offer.

For the poor folks who borrow this money, it's still a deal. Credit card companies charge more than $30 for a missed payment. Banks will sock you with up to $70 for bouncing a check. It's the American way. Like lotteries. Tax the poor. It's good for the economy.

—>*Turning over in his cryogenic chamber dept:* Walt Disney was a shithead. An extreme right-winger, he supported all kinds of political and religious nastiness. And now I get this email from the "Family Pride" group. An organization of homo parents:

The Family Pride Coalition is so proud to offer this Disney weekend opportunity for our families to gather in the Magic Kingdom with other LGBT parents and their families," said Aimee Gelnaw, executive director of the Family Pride Coalition. "Disney has been a welcoming support in the planning of a very special and exciting weekend for our families."

Not that I'm in favor of homo families, but it is a switch.

—>*Why I'm voting for Bush dept:* Yeah, we all hope that *Fahrenheit 9/11* is gonna lose the election for Bush. For that to happen, Americans would need an ounce of brains. That's 27 grams more than the reality. But I have the solution.

I was first able to vote in 1972. I voted for George McGovern against Richard Nixon. Since that time, *every candidate* I voted for has lost. I will lose the election for Bush by voting for him. It hasn't failed yet. I just wanted you to know who to thank.

—>*Speaking of GG dept:* My voice is still sore from the MURDER JUNKIES reunion.

Mike Defiled plays the GG part. He's on stage doing "Bite ItYou Scum." I'm one of the dozens off-stage singing along. He waves me to join him on stage. I shake my head. Drunk beyond drunk, I can barely stand.

He reaches over and grabs me by my JEWDRIVER T-shirt. Someone behind me lifts both my legs. I'm floating onto the stage.

"Bite It You Scum! I'm The One! Bite It

A microphone is in my hands. Mike, who is big enough for me to blow without kneeling, tackles me and throws both of us to the stage floor. We're wrestling, me between his legs, ass rising and falling as we both sing saliva to saliva into the microphone.

"Bite It!Bite It!Bite It!"

It's the most fun I've had in ages. Plus, I get to see THE JABBERS, finally, after all these years.

Oh yeah, there's also SOME ACTION... The Stooges, reborn! The ultimate band for Jeff Bale, though I'd sure give 'em a thumbs up too!

See the tour when it comes to your neighborhood. It sure ain't reasonable.

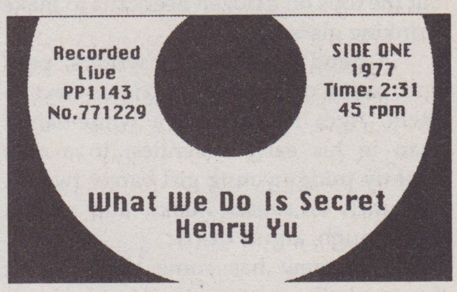
—>*Verification dept:* In case you're wondering, my info about the ever-decreasing number of homos discharged from the army comes from: www.metroweekly.com/gauge/?ak=930. It's on the internet, so it must be true.

—>*Ya gotta love him dept:* He's my new hero. The ballsiest bearded man this side of Fidel. I'm talking Saddam Hussein! I love the guy. Imagine standing up to guys he knows are going to kill him. Imagine taking on the entire might of puppets the US appointed *to kill you*. Imagine saying, "This is just a show so George Bush can be elected." When it *is* just a show. It'll be a shame to see him killed. But it'll be great to see him go unbroken... unless they break him. Me, I wudda been broken by now.

—>*Oh God! dept:* This from *Church and State* magazine:

The Roman Catholic church may soon seek full membership in the United Nations. Right now they are a 'permanent observer.' They are not allowed to vote in the general assembly, but are allowed to vote at international conferences. At those conferences, they often side with Islamic countries to block birth control and abortion. Increasingly, the US sides with the Vatican (and the Islamic states) in these votes. No other religious body has official representation at the UN. Stay tuned.

—>*Oh God again dept:* The same magazine reports that a new poll found that non-Christians gave "evangelical" Christs a 22 percent approval rating. The voters were asked to rank eleven types of individuals, including lawyers, military offices, prostitutes, and ministers. Evangelicals ranked tenth, just above prostitutes.



Things that go Blatt in the Day

My old chum Ken Katkin tipped me off. The old college radio station was gonna be moved to another part of campus and they were looking for volunteers to help pack up the shit. WPRB in Princeton had been housed in the basement of Holder Hall for as long as it had been since I was last there, which was twenty years ago. Since I was gonna be in town anyhow, I responded to the call to arms via email to one Dan R, who turned out to be the current program director. "A chance to finger the vinyl I useta spin," I blathered.

I showed up one morning, I forget which, and everything was the same as always. It was sort of a pit down there. The lobby greeted you first, with its how-now-brown couches, stucco and wood paneling, corkboard, old black and white pictures of various poses of DJ cool and pseudo-cool. Winding my way down the hall, Studio A was still there on the left. A few people were crammed in there. Everyone appeared to be in a daze, lazy hazy daze, moving kinda slowly and not talking. "Uh, is Dan around?" A poofy-haired skinny indie nerd kid replete with the wire framed glasses, typical college DJ fodder, nodded. He looked like a splitting combo between Ken Katkin back-in-the-day and Jeff Saltzman (who you wouldna known, but he nearly died of the same thing Peter Laughner did, and around the same age too). We chatted briefly before I grabbed the chance to pack up all the 45s. It was a pale shadow of its former self. I came across the Gulcher 45s, DANCING CIGARETTES, PANICS, and JETSONS. Then THE DANGEROUS BIRDS classic, "Alpha Romeo." I savored every split seam, rumpling, and the stickers on the back with the review

on them, a check mark for good, a double check mark for fucking good, sometimes accented with a "+" or two for good measure. The reviews were written in longhand, and signed with the reviewer's initials. I saw some I recognized. "EW"...Was that Evie Ward or Eric Weisbard?

As the four or five of us quietly boxed shit up, I heard a booming voice rush into the door as it opened. A gray-haired guy in an old PRB shirt stepped in. His eyebrows arched in a slightly familiar way, but it was his voice that did it. It was pedantic, omniscient, and slightly retarded at the same time. Holy shit, was it Bill Rosenblatt? He cased the joint and left. I turned to Dan and asked, quivering, "I think I knew that guy." "He's the President of the board of the radio station. His name is Bill Rosenblatt," Dan replied. I nearly lost my cookies. When Bill came back in, I mustered a hello.

Bill was the overbearing prog-rock lover who ran the station when I was a peon. He'd call you in the middle of your graveyard shift (2 to 6 am) and remind you that you had a second (or a minute) of dead air. Or that you talked over the news. Or that your segue sucked. And you could hear the relish in his voice when he stuck it to ya. So after a few minutes of niceties, he spent the rest of the afternoon talking about himself and nothing about music. For the prog rock holdovers that ruled the station in 1980, other than the occasional drool over pomps like GENESIS, KING CRIMSON, BRUFORD, WHETTON (finally the supergroup ASIA put the nail in the coffin of prog-rock, thankfully), it was all about power, anality, and the sound of their own booming voices.

After all, WPRB was never left of the dial, despite being a college radio station. Nor did it have the paltry single or double digit wattage whose signal would be lost when you took off your retainer. It sat prominently at 103.3 FM, fifth largest station in New Jersey, and on a good day good (or bad depending on who was DJing), could be received from Philadelphia to NYC. It was certainly one of the very few commercial college radio stations, and as a for profit venture, had a full sales staff, produced and conceived its own ads, and made enough profits to have its own car, build out a studio B and C, and able to augment its record library with frequent buying trips to the nearby Princeton Record Exchange. Thus it attracted those who were attracted to its potential as a media powerhouse and resume builder.

When some of us started flocking to the station in 1980, the real passionate music fans emerged. Yes, we were not always the most competent DJ's and we did get fucked up sometimes and do acid and mushrooms and get hurt slam dancing, and nearly flunking out on occasion...but it was always so much about the music. Music needed to save our misfit lives as misfit kids. It was about FLIPPER, and BAD BRAINS, FLESHEATERS, X, GUN CLUB, MINOR THREAT, BLACK FLAG, then early REM, REPLACEMENTS, VIOLENT FEMMES. It was weird shit like AMOR FATI and JOHN TRUBEE, THROBBING GRISTLE AND CAZZAZZA X. "Why can't I get just one fuck" was more than the frat boy mantra reverberation it is now; back then it was a screaming burst of nerd boy frustration. It was living show to show, record to record, driving to Maxwell's and City Gardens...Jeez, those were the days!

Anyhow, after what seemed like an eternal damnation of Blattspeak, I finally cut outta there. I shoulda skipped the "free" pizza. Sometimes an attempt to recapture a glorified past even if only for a couple of hours only puts you square up against the ole goon squad.

Reviews

An ish or two ago, mebbe more, we told ya all about Sacto's Plastic Idol Records. This time they strike with the band FOUR EYES, who drop in with their first full length on the shiny disc format. FOUR EYES (www.thefoureyes.com) are self-described geek-popsters who write songs about the non-pent-up side of nerd fare, like sci fi, fantasy games...for fans of the DESCENDENTS and their brethren.

From the archives of our favorite godfather of punk, Dennis Most, is a 1976 live set with his pre-INSTIGATORS band called AUDIO LOVE. They forge their way through a combination of originals, such as an early version of "Excuse My Spunk" and well-chosen covers from the likes of Syd Barrett, LOVE, ZAPPA, BUBBLE PUPPY...these guys were well versed in their proto-punk primer. On Captain Trip records outta Japan, meaning you get two sleeves, one in each linguini.

OK, anyone remember when some of the Dangerhouse master tapes were up for grabs on eBay? I forgot who won them, but our favorite bootician has used a couple of them to kick the doors out of this month's reissues market. ALLEYCATS with their "Nothing Means Nothing Anymore" gets both "live band" shot and "lounge" shot picture sleeves faithfully repro-ed, as well as a coupla hun on clear wax. RHINO 39 gets yellow wax treatment on 200 of its press as well as repro of its original sleeve. Nice work. I was sent a digital photo of the master tapes from the jolly man for proof. Get it where you can.

Just when you thought it was over, The Shielded By Death compilation series reaches its third installment. Again on Bacchus Archives, compiler Keith "Earl" Grave dips into his vast vault of vintage punk and hardcore in the Connecticut and Western Mass area. Ramblin' liner notes grace the innards of the pup.

Reissues of note: "No Questions Asked" from THE FLESHEATERS, along with their first 45 plus some early demos, can be found on the Atavistic Label. Henry Rollins's imprint label reissues the classic DC compilation "30 Seconds over DC," and THE ABUSED's "Loud And Clear" appears on CD—not sure it's legit or not. Send us sludge at 601 Fourth St, #114, SF, CA 94107.

Three Generations for Choice: My mom, my daughter and I march on Washington DC

For weeks, my mom had been asking me what I wanted for my birthday. I honestly could not think of a single thing I wanted. But when she asked me again what I wanted on my actual birthday, I had finally come up with an answer, "The best present would be for you to march with us in April."

For months, I had been telling her all about what was shaping up to look like the biggest Pro-Choice march in the history of the U.S. She listened in earnest but remained uncommitted, hesitant to take part in something she had never engaged in before, even though she considers herself a life-long pro-choicer.

So when she called me back two days after my birthday with her excited news, "I'm going to march with you!" I was ecstatic. Since I had first heard of the March For Women's Lives, to be held in Washington DC on April 25, 2004, there was no doubt that I'd be taking my daughter. Now that my mom would be

joining us, I really had to start cracking on the logistics.

Luckily, the pieces fell into place easily. My daughter and I would fly to Philly a few days early and stay with my friend and her new housemates. We'd pick my mom up at the Philly airport a few days later and drive to my friend's aunt's house just outside of DC (My mom felt more comfortable with this part knowing that my friend's mom and aunt were also going to be marching.) We'd take the Metro into and out of the city on the day of the march. Then, we'd drive back to Philly and crash for the night at the Danger! Danger! House and the three of us would fly out together in the morning.

I'm glad to say that all went as planned. Mishaps and missed connections really don't faze me much, but for my mom's neophyte sake, I'm relieved there were none. And given the fact that I have always been her in-love-with-punk-daughter, she rolled with the stink and chaos of the Danger! Danger! house and even went without showering for days. Ah, like daughter, like mother.

After we picked my mom up at the airport but before we started driving to DC, we engaged in a bit of sign making creativity. Well, my daughter did anyway ... the housemates were getting the house all ready for a party that we'd be missing that evening and they had a bunch of art supply type stuff strewn about.

At four-years-old, my daughter has enough large-scale demonstration experience under her umbrella stroller wheels that she knows what a march is and that we were headed to a big one the next day. Though the concept of "a woman's right to choose" currently escapes her, she does know that war is bad for kids. I didn't set out for her to know the yukkiness of war at such a young age, but given today's current political climate, her exposure to what war looks like was imminent. Children are sentient beings who take in all that surrounds them, including words and images from the media.

So when she grabbed a cardboard cut out shape of a dove out of the party decoration pile and asked me, "How do I spell No War?" I smiled and spelled it out for her as she carefully wrote each letter. She sought out masking tape with which to attach a short stick and finished making her sign. I was honestly impressed that making the sign had been her own idea entirely and that she had done it all on her own, sans the spelling help, with her own message. My little DIY diva! We packed her sign and ourselves into my friend's car and hit the road.

We got to DC and gathered snack supplies for our backpacks in preparation for the long next day ahead of us. That night, my daughter could hardly settle down to sleep as her excitement over the new surroundings and anticipation of the march engulfed her. My mom was anxious, too, and both of their enthusiasm got me wound up as well, so much so that I didn't sleep well and woke up tired but ready to go thanks to whatever adrenaline type juices get pumping in situations like these.

Stepping out of the Metro and onto the streets of DC, I was instantly in awe of the masses. I had never seen so many people gathered in the same place for the same reason. The closer we walked to the assembly place, the more crowded the streets got. By the time we reached the lawn, I began to wonder if we'd ever find our delegation, the Mamas For Choice, a group of 80 plus mamas from all over the country. In searching for them among a million people, I somehow did find where the civil disobedience action I knew about was happening.

We stayed there a while, helping hold banners and announcing over a bull horn for people to step up and receive a prescription good for twelve refills of morning after pills. There was a pill toss where women illegally threw out morning after pills to a crowd of women who did not have prescriptions for such pills. Since I considered myself unarrestable due to my daughter being with me, I didn't throw out any of the pills myself. But just being there watching women break the law as an act of civil disobedience, the goal being to put pressure on the FDA to move the morning after pill from prescription status to over the counter, I felt empowered.

Cutting it close to step off time, we frantically looked for our Mamas For Choice delegation and found them with not even five minutes to spare. Luck was definitely with us as searching for a small group of people among a million is even harder than finding a needle in a haystack. At least when searching for that proverbial needle, you can move the hay around a little. And we didn't know what our needle looked like; most of us had never met face to face before.

With the march having officially stepped off, it seemed like forever that we were moving at a snail's pace off the lawn and onto the street. Trying to get more than a million marchers from a relatively wide gathering place to a narrower stream of the street has that effect I guess. We were elbow to elbow and it was hard, nearly impossible, to keep our Mamas For Choice stroller brigade together. Somehow, we managed and finally made it to the street. I really thought we'd start to move faster then, but we didn't.

It was actually incredible how slow the entire march was. Not incredible because of the drawing out of a couple of miles that usually takes a relatively short time to finish into hours and hours, but incredible because it was the sheer numbers of people making it so. And the old, young, and disabled were all sticking it out in spite of the heat.

Rumor has it that there were so many people (the official number at 1.15 million, making it the largest demonstration in U.S history), that the people at the head of the march had completed the entire march route before the last of the marchers had even stepped off! What does this mean? Over a million people had what's called the National Mall completely surrounded!

My favorite part of the slowness of the march was when the march procession was at a stand still and I looked at my mom who was literally marching in place, throwing her fist in the air chanting along with all the people around us.

At a different time, my daughter made me swell with pride. The crowd around us had just been chanting, "What do we want? Choice! When do we want it? Now!" As it died down, she started her own, "Kids need choices! Kids need choices!" She liked the reaction it drew, so she continued, "Kids don't have to do what they don't wanna do! Kids don't have to do what they don't wanna do!" This one raised a few granny eyebrows, so she sheepishly amended with, "Except sometimes when they have to! Except sometimes when they have to!" Again, she liked the favorable reaction, so she started in on a new one, "Kids shouldn't smoke! Kids shouldn't smoke!" as she jumped up and down shaking her pompoms in anyone's face who would let her.

Later, my daughter told me that her favorite part of the march was the radical cheerleaders, who we saw several squads of perform, some of them familiar friends she'd met before. And my mom's favorite part was reading all the different signs and being among such a diverse group of million plus people. She cracked up at a middle-aged man who had a pillow stuffed up under his shirt, holding a sign that read, "If men could get pregnant, abortion would be a sacrament." And she

snapped pictures of signs like "Lick Bush in 2004!" and "Between Dick and Bush we got screwed!"

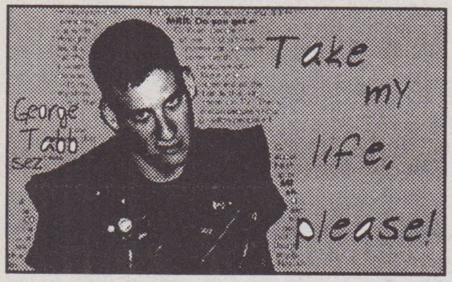
Overall, it was an amazing experience. For months, I've been searching for the words to convey just how much I got out of doing something like this with my mom and my daughter. More than just feeling empowered that we were able to demonstrate safely for something we feel passionately about, I feel like some barriers between my mom and I were taken down. For one, it really opened up meaningful communication between us. There are many things this experience taught me about my mom and I know she learned things about me as well. It was and still is so important to me that she was able to share some family history with me that revealed that we are just the newest generations of a legacy of women who believe in a woman's right to choose.

Unfortunately, it takes an insane lunatic like G.W. Bush to draw out folks like my mom, a schoolteacher in her 50s, into action. But fortunately, now that she's gotten a taste of what democracy looks like, she'll stay active in whatever ways she feels inspired and impassioned to do so. Now that she's participated and experienced first hand something brand new to her that was intimidating to her before, she'll remain empowered and spread her enthusiasm and new found confidence to speak up where she didn't before—at her workplace, in her neighborhood, and at future actions.

As for my daughter, I feel confident that her early exposure to people getting together to fight against injustice will serve her well.

And as for me, I will always remember these feelings and hopes for my daughter's future and the ones who come after her when I look at the framed snapshot of my mom, my daughter and me together holding a sign that reads, "Three generations for Choice!"

Punk parents, get in touch. PO Box 220331 / Hollywood, FL 33022 OR yardwideyarns@hotmail.com



"Did you ever see people you knew from Greenwich again?" asks the news reporter, doing a story on my first book, out now on Soft Skull Press, called *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows In Greenwich*.

"Uh," I sorta stammer. I don't want to tell her that I did.

Why?

Because, well, it was fuckin' insane.

So I tell her "no."

But I lied.

A few years after leaving Stepford, errr, Greenwich, Connecticut, I ran into some old friends. My life was now completely different. But I guess theirs wasn't.

•••

So the door buzzer rings in my parents' apartment in the west apartment and I shout to my mom, "I'll get it."

I unlock the latch on the top of the double doors, and the buzzer rings again.

"Hang on," I yell as I undo the latch on the bottom of the doors.

Again the buzzer rings.

"Pushy fucking driver," I say to myself as I struggle with the doors, which were just painted, so little pieces of white stuff are falling on my head. Again the buzzer goes off.

My mom asks me if I am going to answer it.

As I am about to ramble off a line of obscenities, the doors finally give and I swing them open.

My mom shouts, "George, is it your car? Is she here?" I look at the aromatic figure standing in front of me. He is wearing a big greenish winter coat, filthy of course. His beard is more disgusting than ever, his clothes look very familiar, and he is wearing my old boots.

"What's up, Harris?" I say to the singer of the band that cannot be mentioned.

"George, the thing is this, I have a date with this hot chickie baby, and I need to be clean."

I just stare at him thinking that nothing, I mean nothing, could clean this guy.

"George, I need to use your shower and clean up. Also it would help if ya gave me some more clothes, these are kinda dirty."

I knew the clothes looked familiar.

"Harris," I say to the singer of the band that cannot be mentioned, "aren't you tired of living in a squat and not being clean? I mean, I need at least five showers a day. How can you live like this?"

"The thing is this," replies Harris, "I live in my own building, not a squat, I have my own entrance, I have ten apartments, and I am living the life of luxury."

"But Harris," I say to the stench before me, "your own entrance is a manhole, and the building has no roof."

"Details, details," Harris says to me.

"Who is at the door?" my mom asks again. I tell her it is Harris from the band that cannot be mentioned. She says, "Oh," then mumbles something about guessing that from the smell. Harris is oblivious to this comment. Actually, Harris is oblivious to lots of things. Finally he says, "So, George, the thing is this, can I use your shower?" Having just taken my fourth shower of the day, I figure it will be okay, but I better ask my mom.

"Mom," I yell, "come here, Harris wants to take a shower."

"Here?" shouts Nick, my stepfather, from the other room.

"He wants to take a shower here?"

I hear my mom quietly but firmly talking to him. Then she walks into my room where Harris is still standing outside.

"Why is he still outside?" asks my mom.

"Ya mean I gotta let him in?" I ask my mom.

She just looks at me.

Like moms do.

So I motion for Harris to walk in. He does. His odor follows him.

"Hi Barbara," Harris says to my mom.

"Hi Harris," my mom says back to Harris and his smell.

"The thing is this, Barbara, I have a date and I need to be clean. She is a really nice girl, and she may even be Jewish."

My mom nods her head and pats Harris on the shoulder.

Yuuch, she touched him.

"So, the thing is this," says Harris to my mom, "I was wondering if I could borrow your shower?"

"Sure," my mom replies, "as long as you return it." Then she laughs. And I thought Nick was the only one with the bad jokes in the house.

"Actually, Harris, you can use it, but last time you used it, it took me two hours to get it clean because all the dirt and crud from you dried to the walls and floor of the tub. It was hard to scrape off."

Harris nods his head.

"So," my mom continues, "this time I am giving you this bottle of Fantastic to take in the shower with you. After you bathe, use it. If you get the crud out now, I won't have any problem." Harris nods

his head as my mom gives him a bottle of Fantastic she pulls out from under the sink. She also hands him a garbage bag.

"What is this for?" he asks her?

"That is for your clothes, Harris. Put them in the bag and seal it. Then you can dispose of them properly after you leave."

"But what am I gonna wear?" asks the singer from the band that cannot be mentioned.

My mom looks at me.

I feel my heart sink in my chest.

"George," she says, and I know what is coming next, "why don't you give your friend Harris some of your old clothes?"

"But mom, I like my clothes, and besides, he's Harris!"

My mom just looks at me. Like moms do.

"Okay, okay."

I go to my closet and pull out an old pair of blue corduroys, size 31 Fruit-Of-The-Loom jockey underwear, and pair of white socks with holes in them, and my old Buzzcocks t-shirt that doesn't fit me anymore. I hand them to Harris. My mom smiles and tell us it is good to see friends share. Harris thanks my mom and goes into the bathroom. After he turns the water on in the shower, I hear Nick say to my mom, "What's the problem, is the car wash on Broadway and Houston closed?"

My mom giggles.

So I lay back down on my bed and soon after, the door buzzer goes off. I get up and open the door, much easier this time.

"Who is it?" my mom asks.

I look at the figure standing in front of me. It is a man, about fifty or so, wearing a driver's uniform, a cap, a tie, and smelling a hell of a lot better than Harris.

"Mr. Tabb?" he asks.

"Yah," I say.

"Hi, I'm Tom, Ms. Preens's driver. Are you ready to go?"

I yell to my mom that it is the driver, and he is here to take me to see Carrie. My mom and Nick come walking into my room to get a look at the chauffeur. They both smile.

"Mr. Tabb?" the driver asks again.

"Um, okay, I'll be right out," I tell the driver, and close the door. My mom and Nick look at me and laugh. Then Nick tells me he is glad to see I am going out with higher-class women. My mom laughs. They tell me to have fun, and if I am going to be home past two, to give them a call. I tell them I will. They go back to their room. I hear the shower turn off, and figure that is good, 'cause I need to get in there and put more Jovan Musk For Men on, 'cause I like to smell good, and I'm that kinda guy. I knock on the door and Harris opens it. He is wearing a towel. He is soaking wet, and looks like a watered down rat. His hair is all matted down, as is his beard. And he really looks skinny under all those clothes.

"Hi Harris," I say to the singer of the band that cannot be mentioned.

Suddenly the aroma of Fantastic really hits my nose hard. Which is really not that hard to do, if ya have ever seen my nose. Anyway, I look at Harris funny. Then he says, "The thing is this, George, that stuff your mom gave me really works good. It got all the dirt off of me no problem. I feel so clean."

Doh.

•••

As I ride uptown in the limo, I wonder how the hell I got myself in this situation. I mean this girl, Carrie Williams, was really cute and all. I mean really. I had met her in tenth grade, back in Connecticut, but that was years earlier. Running into her on the street in the middle of New York a couple of weeks back was pretty neat.

Actually, I more like bumped into her.

Really hard.

I was drunk and stumbling around St. Mark's Place, right after a False Prophets rehearsal.

Me and Mustache & Nails were walking around looking for something to do.

Mustache & Nails was Stephen, the lead singer of the False Prophets. I called him Mustache & Nails cause of his cute little Hitler mustache and his overgrown fingernails.

Overgrown is probably not the right word. More like bizarre. Weird. Out of this fucking world. His nails were so long that they curled up. And he painted them black.

Anyway, we were walking around, looking for a place to get cheap drinks, and finally figured we'd go to the Holiday, an old man's bar where the drinks were cheap and the women were cheaper.

Well, actually they were so cheap that they were men. They just dressed like women. It was fun to flirt with them. They always knew the right thing to say. But sometimes their beards and bulges were a bit off-putting.

So Mustache & Nails and me start to make our way down the little stairwell into the Holiday when I bump into this yuppie girl. She is wearing a black dress, has a Johnny Ramone haircut, is wearing a large string of pearls around her neck, has these large earrings, and is wearing black stockings and high-heeled shoes.

I tell this woman I am sorry for bumping into her, curse her out under my breath for being a yuppie, and continue to make my way into the bar. Then she says, "George? George Tabb?"

I look at her.

Her face does not ring a bell.

At all.

But her friend's does.

I recognize her as Susan, this girl I went through grade school with.

"Ginger?" I say to her.

"Fred?" she says back to me.

I used to call her Ginger Rogers in seventh grade and she called me Fred Astaire. We took ballroom dancing together. I actually touched her arm a couple of times.

Wow.

We both recognize one another and hug each other.

Mustache & Nails and the girl with the pearls and Johnny Ramone haircut just look at each other and then at us. Susan than introduces me to the girl with pearls, who is Carrie Williams. Carrie tells me she's remembered me ever since we were little.

Whatever.

Then Susan steps back and looks at me.

Then at Stephen.

Then at me again.

Then she says, "What happened to you?" I look at her funny.

What could she be asking? I think to myself. I mean, here I am, in my leather jacket with the U.S. pins, a pair of black jeans, big white high-top sneakers 'cause I'm from New York and I can kick some serious ass, and my hair is dyed black and spiky.

I then look at Susan. She is wearing a pants suit. A pants suit. A fucking pants suit.

Okay.

So, I say to Susan, "Whatta ya mean what happened to me?"

And she says, "You are so, um, punk." I look at Mustache & Nails and he looks at me. "Yeah," I say, "I guess I am."

Then Carrie says, "You look really cute." I blush. I take a better look at Carrie. She is really cute under all that grown-up woman stuff. We all get to talking and the girls ask what Stephen and I do. We tell them we are in the False Prophets, and they make jokes about

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profits. And how their daddies always make profits.

Whatever.

Finally Stephen gets bored of the conversation and tells me he'll meet me in the bar, and that it was nice meeting the girls. They tell him it was nice meeting him, and as soon as he goes into the bar, they ask me what is wrong with him. I tell them he is a lead singer, and they are all nuts. But at least this one takes showers.

They just look at me.

So Carrie and Susan and I talk a while longer, and somehow I wind up giving Carrie my number. It turns out she lives with Susan. They are roommates. Susan is in advertising, and Carrie is almost a lawyer or something. They live together on the upper west side. Carrie asks me if it is okay for her to call and ask me out on a date.

I think to myself, this could be great. A really rich girl. Cute also. This could really work well.

But then I think, well, she really is a yuppie, she probably only wants to go out with me 'cause I am punk, and it will impress her friends, and that I shouldn't be used as a piece of meat.

Then Carrie says, "George, if we go out, I'll have my limo pick you up. And in it is a full bar, plus nose candy."

I ask her when she wants to see me.

•••

So, there I am, riding in the back of her limo, drinking vodka, from the bottle of course. Every once in a while, the driver looks back and winces. Here is this guy in a leather jacket drinking all this booze, and doing coke he probably scored. He is probably used to John Kennedy Junior or Robert Chambers types riding around in the limo. Ya know, nice yuppie rapists. But no, here is this punk rocker, and his feet are even up on the seat in front of him.

I just smile.

When we finally arrive on the upper west side, Tom gets out of the limo, goes around the back, and opens the side door for me. "Here ya go, Mr. Tabb," he says to me.

"Are we there?" I ask Tom, really drunk, and a bit speedy. "Yes, Ms. Williams is in Apartment #10A, and she is expecting you."

"Thank you, my good man," I say to Tom, having learned that line from lots of stupid English movies where the rich guy always says that.

"My pleasure," he says back to me, and behind his nice brown eyes I can see flames of hate, and my naked and charred body roasting on an open fire, with an apple in my mouth.

I make my way into the lobby of the building, and tell the door guy I am here to see Carrie.

He asks, "Who?"

I say Carrie.

He says, "Carrie who?"

I tell him that girl who can throw knives with her mind, and takes baths in pig's blood. He just looks at me.

"Williams," I say, "Carrie Williams."

"Oh," he says, takes a look at my leather jacket and big white sneakers, sneers, then picks up the phone and rings Carrie. "Ms. Williams, a gentleman in a leather jacket is here to see you." She must have said okay or something, 'cause the guy points to the elevator.

As I enter Carrie's apartment I go into shock. There are all these expensive vases and artwork and stuff all over the place. I guess I should have guessed her place would look like this. I mean the fucking lobby of the building had a fountain in it, which people had thrown money into. There were lots of quarters and dimes and stuff.

A real good amount of money.

And there were no pennies.

Carrie's place looks great. Like a real grownup's house. There are no punk rock posters on the wall, just those chicken and other metal cutouts ya see in lots of kitchens. Carrie tells me it is great to see me, and says she is glad I dressed for the occasion. I ask her what occasion.

Then Susan walks into the room, "Why, what do you mean what occasion?" Susan asks me. I tell her I dunno what occasion is going on. Carrie than explains to me that today she got her first gold AmEx, with a 10K limit.

"What?" I ask, totally confused.

I figure these girls are talking Martian.

"She got her gold AmEx," Susan repeats to me.

"What is an 'AmEx'?" I ask Susan, thinking that it must be a degree from that technical school were you too can learn to fix air-conditioners and automobiles.

"An AmEx is an American Express," explains Susan.

"Oh, I say." Then I add, "What's that?"

Carrie explains to me that it is a credit card. That her dad co-signed for it and that she has a 10K limit, which means she can spend up to ten thousand dollars on it. I think of all the beer and drugs I could buy with that.

Wow.

"How do I get one?" I ask the girls.

They both giggle.

So we are out at a Chinese restaurant with Susan's boyfriend, and a bunch of other yuppies. They, throughout the entire meal, keep congratulating Carrie on her credit card. I keep wondering why. Finally, when it comes time to pay the check, everyone, and I mean everyone, whips out their credit card.

Everyone except me.

They all begin to argue about who gets to "charge it" on their credit card.

I just look at the unfinished food, call over a waiter, and ask him to put it in a doggy bag. Everyone stops arguing and looks at me.

"What?" I say.

Carrie mumbles something about not having me trained right yet.

They all laugh, and go about arguing over who gets to charge it again. Finally the waiter shows up with a large bag of uneaten food, and I take it.

Oh, and Carrie wins, 'cause she just got her credit card, so she got to pay for it.

•••

After dinner, me and Susan and Carrie get into Carrie's limo. She tells Tom to take us down to Soho, that we are going to a party to celebrate her getting her gold AmEx. Tom nods his head and begins to drive. I tell Carrie that I want some vodka. She gives me the bottle and a glass. I give her back the glass and drink out of the bottle.

Punk Rock.

Susan just looks at me and finally says, "George, it must have been horrible when you left Connecticut. Maybe that is why you really don't know how to act in public."

I look at Susan, let out a real good vodka burp, wipe my mouth with the sleeve of my leather jacket, and then ask Carrie to pass the cocaine.

Please.

When we arrive at the party, all Carrie's friends greet her at the door and shriek and hug her. A couple of them even cry. They all claim that they are so happy for Carrie that she has finally got her gold AmEx. Carrie walks around the party introducing me to her friends. She tells them all that I am "Punk Rock." Most people say they can tell by the way I am dressed. One guy even says that he likes punk, and that Sting kicks some serious ass.

Uh-huh.

I just look at him, and all the other guys. They are wearing jackets and ties,

nice pressed trousers, and shoes. They all look like their dads. And the women, they are all, or almost all, wearing lots of jewelry and makeup. They all look like grownups.

"Where's the beer?" I ask Carrie.

•••

So I'm standing by the refrigerator, downing some shitty foreign beer that I could never afford, when this cute girl walks up to me. She kinda looks like Carrie, only a bit taller. And blonde. She tells me that she too knows me from school, and that her name is Melissa. I tell her that I wish I could remember her, but I can't. She tells me not to worry about it. Then she gives me a piece of paper. It is folded. I open it and on it is her name and phone number. I look at Melissa.

She says, "Don't tell Carrie, but I'd really like to go out with you. You are really cute."

I blush.

Then put the paper in my rear pocket.

She smiles at me and licks her finger.

Does that mean what I think it means.

Naw.

Couldn't be.

I continue to drink more shitty imported beer, and make my way to an open window, and look down on the empty streets below me. A striking black-haired girl with the clearest blue eyes I have ever seen walks up to me. "Hi George," she says.

"Hi, " I answer back.

"I'm Tori," she says.

"Did we go to school together too?"

She laughs and tells me we didn't.

"Whew," I say.

Then she hands me a business card with some writing on the back of it. On the front of the card it says that she is an interior decorator, on the back is a phone number that is different from the one on the front.

"What's this?" I ask her, pointing to the handwritten number.

She tells me that it is her home number, and to give her a call sometime. But late, though, because her boyfriend is over earlier. And not to tell Carrie. I just stare at her stunned. This happens two more times, with a couple of other yuppie girls.

Finally, I think I go into a state of shock, 'cause I stop drinking.

•••

Eventually Carrie walks up to me, after being hugged and congratulated on her gold AmEx by everyone there. She asks me if I like her friends. I tell her they are very interesting.

"Good," she says, "I want you to like them. They all seem to like you."

"Yeah," I say, "they do."

•••

As we are about to leave the party, everyone asks Carrie to take out her gold AmEx card once more. She does, and everyone oooohs and aaahhhs.

Then I make an announcement.

I tell everyone that I too have a credit card.

I mean, hell, I was feeling left out.

Everyone starts asking if it's Visa, MasterCard, or Amex. Then some people mumble that Visa and MasterCard are inferior, and that they would be caught dead with one of those.

I tell everyone that my card is great. It can get me washing machines and dryers. It can get me a new lawnmower, or even parts for a car. The room gets dead quiet. I tell them that unlike them, when I got my card, I got a free gift.

A real LCD watch, with a battery that lasts a whole year.

No one says a damn thing.

Then I take out my Sears card and show it to everyone. I think I really did kinda expect a pat on the back or some applause or something.

Nothing. Dead silence.

Then Carrie clears her throat and thanks everyone for a great party, grabs my hand and begins to drag me out the door. Two of the girls who gave me their numbers whisper to me to not bother calling them. I smile.

After we get in the limo, Carrie tells the driver that the first stop will be my apartment.

I tell her that I don't wanna go home, that we should go out and continue getting more fucked up.

She tells me that she really likes me, but that I embarrassed her tonight, and that she just wants to go home.

Alone. I say okay.

Then she leans over and starts to make out with me.

Whatever.

We get to my apartment. Tom tells us we have arrived, and we stop making out.

As Carrie is buttoning up her shirt, she tells me she'd like to see me again this weekend.

I tell her fine, that would be great, and to send the car for me.

She says she will, and we kiss one last time. I get out of the limo and wave to her as she waves back at me through the back window of the limo. I think to myself that that was real fun. And that I kinda do like her. And would like to see her again.

So what if she is a yuppie?

She has lots of booze and drugs.

And besides, I'm not gonna marry her or anything.

We go out a couple of more times, and of course it is a complete and total disaster.

But that's another story.

•••

I walked into my parents' apartment, and they were still up. They asked me how my date was, and I told them it was really funny, and I'd tell them all about it, but first I had to take a major leak. They laughed as I went into the bathroom and shut the door.

As I pissed, I looked down on the floor and saw a white garbage bag, sealed with a twisty. I wondered what was in it. I stopped finished pissing, shook twice, and put it away.

Then I open the bag.

This stench attacked my nose and mouth and eyes so hard I got dizzy. I saw some of my old clothes in the bag and remembered Harris, from the band that cannot be mentioned, had been over. I tried to close the bag as fast as I could, but it wasn't fast enough. The stench went through my nose, eyes, mouth to my stomach. And I puked all over the toilet.

Not in it.

As my mom helped me wipe it up, I insisted to her that it was the smell of Harris. And that I really hadn't been drinking at all that night. She just laughed.

Take my life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. The new Riverdales CD, *Phase Three*, is wonderful. Again, it's the best Ramones album since *Storm The Streets*! You go, Ben!
3. Also saw some local bands and got their demos. Smut Muffin rules...they cover "Now I Wanna Be Your Dog" better than Iggy! So do The Wrong Siders. On Longshot Records I got Rum Runner's new one, *Association*, as well as The Fallout's *Turning Revolution Into Money.* Punk Rock! Also got some advance CD of band called *Hazen Street*. They sound like Linkin Park. Big whoop. But the Deadly Weapons CD on Johnny Cat Records rules.
4. Come find me on Myspace.com. My addy thing is: http://profile.myspace.com/users/285349.

5. My first book, *Playing Right Field: A Jew Grows In Greenwich* is out now. Please pick it up or ask your local librarian to get it for you! Then it's free!

You know what's annoying? When someone (usually a boy) says that they can't sit with their back to the door in a restaurant, because it makes them nervous. Were all these people in the mafia, or what?

Another thing that's annoying: when punks dress up their babies or toddlers with mohawks and leather jackets. I mean, I adore miniature versions of larger things, like camera batteries, baby envelopes, old answering machine tapes, and the little screwdrivers in eyeglass repair kits. But little things that are *intended* to be cute don't usually have the same charm, for me. Bonsai trees just make me uncomfortable.

I'm not opposed to punks having kids—I think that can be as compatible with being a punk as anything. And your baby wearing a tiny handmade shirt of your band? Precious. But I disapprove of little kids showing up at shows in full regalia. I'll even go so far as to say it's not punk, to dress them that way. It undermines the punk aesthetic, which is by its nature a self-created image, a rejection—or at least a reassessment—of the norms we've been handed. So what happens if *that's* the aesthetic you hand down, along with the inevitable "aw, cute"s that make it safer and easier? Washing down and washing out, that's what. Hot Topic-ization from within.

You know what else is annoying? When people write about their summer vacations. Ha ha.

•••••

Clara's never been to Florida. "I always think of it as being like Southern California," she says. We're talking in the warehouse where we practice, the amps humming, our voices echoing off the half-loaded pallets in the darkness. We're taking a little break between songs, trying to figure out our superhuman summer schedule.

"Oh, no, no, no, no," I say. "It's nothing like that." That's never even occurred to me, as a person who's spent a lot more time in the south than I've spent in SoCal, but I can see how it might look that way in postcards, what with sunsets, bikinis, Disney, and everything. Plus, Clara's from the desert. It's natural that she should forget to take the weather into account, when thinking about Florida. Or the military, or religion.

"Florida's definitely in the South," I tell her, trying, feebly, to describe what has always been more of a feeling than anything else. "It's a Southern state, with everything that means. But it's different, too. There's a sense of opportunism, there, that's hard to put your finger on, and a complexity to the economy and the population, a different set of influences than anywhere else. And it's a big state, too." I tell her about the used books and boiled peanuts for sale on the roadsides, and the signs outside the many churches, changed weekly with messages like "God is watching. Pray Constantly."

A week later I'm there, drinking in the wet air. On the gulf, near where the Panhandle elbows out west, my family congregates yearly near a small mill town. The mill is a paper mill, which used to alert you to its presence miles off by the putrid smell of the processing. But the mill, the town's only industry, was shut down a few years back, along with a number of similar ones in this part of the state, when the corporation that owned them moved its business toward cheaper labor.

Increasingly, the town has turned toward tourism and out-of-town real estate sales to keep some cash coming in. New development always look strange, here, where the swamp land is still intact for long stretches, broken only by stands of thin conifers in neat lines, growing on patches of the paper company's land. The cleared areas are unconvincing: the houses too white, the lawns over-groomed, while the swampland pulses nearby, still accountable only to the vines and insects.

As we drive along the cape, my cousin Lisa tells me about an attempt by the tourism board to increase movement into the area. It was a contest, which folks from all over the country could enter to win a grand, big house in the middle of the woods. The grounds were sprawling, the rooms spacious—there was even an outdoor bathtub.

"But it's a swamp!" laughed my cousin, who has lived here all her life. She's back for the summer, after her second year in college up north, and more sensitive than any of us to the changes in the landscape. "All the locals knew that whoever moved there wouldn't last a year. The mosquitoes would eat you alive—they'd be breeding in your outdoor bathtub."

"So did anyone win the house?" asked my sister, from the back seat.

"This family from Colorado won it, and they moved out here, packed up everything and moved. They lasted three months," said Lisa, "and then moved home. Pretty funny though. As far as I know, the house it still out there, probably buried under the kudzu by now."

•••••

The storms are something else in the southeast. I woke up just before dawn to a flash so bright it blinded me—the storm was all around the house. Outside, the lightning licked the ground, and the windows shook with the rain.

I couldn't get back to sleep. I was thinking about the photos my great uncle showed me the night before, after we'd come back from his 60th wedding anniversary party at the senior's center in town.

True to family tradition, my aunt the actor had organized my many cousins, ranging in age from two to twenty, into some sort of performing troupe. To celebrate my Aunt Ruth and Uncle Jim's anniversary, they reenacted their lives together by way of skits, musical numbers, etc. Each skinny little kid had some sort of talent that fit into the program. My eight-year-old nephew Sage, having grown up in a lightly different environment than most of the others, showed off his talent for walking on the handles of a pair of crutches like they were stilts.

It's OK, I won't fall off," he said, when we were initially doubtful. "I can stay on them for 734 seconds." He made good time, too, as he did staggering laps around the adults seated at long tables with our fruit cups and coffee. It was most impressive.

Although I am one of their generation, almost the oldest, I wasn't in the mood to be in the play with my cousins. It was all in fun, but I thought the cheery reenactments of the old war days when the couple was married needed a bit of counterpoint. I couldn't stop thinking about how close their anniversary was to the 60th anniversary of D-Day—they were married just before Jim was shipped off to service. With this in mind, I read a wartime poem by a Russian poet of their generation, a little younger.

The poem was about a young boy who finds himself alone, in the middle of

the war torn countryside, after the Germans dive-bomb his family's train. He comes across an even smaller girl, also separated from her family by the bombs. Thinking himself magnanimous, he teams up with her on their long search for safety, only to find that he needs her strength, endurance, and resourcefulness as much as she needs his.

The rest of my family was distracted and ready for cake. It was a sad poem, possibly inappropriate. But my aunt, with the knife to cut the anniversary cake in her hand, looked at me with sad, listening eyes. She understood that it was also a love poem.

On the road home from the senior center, my sharp and gracious aunt told me how she had worked at the Red Cross for four years, during the war, including the time her husband was away in battle. In her position, she had tended men just returning with no arms and legs, in agony, unwilling to see their wives. She also talked to those wives, tried to calm them and get them ready for the life ahead. "And for those who were unmarried," she said, "the mothers..." She spent one of those years working in a mental hospital, dealing with the damage the war had done to men's minds.

"It's been so many years," she said, "And I tell you, I have never, never been able to find an answer."

"We had to do it, Ruth," said her husband, taking her hand. Both of their eyes were wet; it was an old argument, which would never be resolved.

••••

I visited Paris earlier this summer. My pen pal Stephane graciously put me up, but having a solitary streak, I had to take some time alone to just watch and read. I headed to the Luxembourg Gardens, the manicured gardens created as a playground for Catherine De Medici, with a palace at one end built because she was heartsick for the Pitti Palace. In front of the palace is a large fountain, around which people sit and read talk, or just nap in comfortable chairs which you can move around to where you want them, although a gendarme blew his whistle urgently at a tourist who moved one too close to the fountain.

Around the outside of the gardens wall was photography exhibit, with giant black and whit photographs of the Liberation of Paris. The pictures were truly breathtaking, from the terrifying shots of the beach at Normandy, to the shots of dead soldiers, and family members, starved and beaten by the fighting and the camps, reuniting after the war. The photos that held me the most were the pictures of the battles fought in the cities, right in the streets of Paris. One showed a group of students pulling up the cobblestones from the street to use as barricades. Another showed old men and women with makeshift helmets and pistols, waiting in for the Germans in a crumbled bakery.

I pulled up a chair for myself, and sat reading, just listening to the conversations around me, enjoying the light rain that fell in drops so large you could almost succeed in dodging them. When the rain came a little harder, I packed up and went for a walk around the park, to where the teenagers cheerfully assembled in wrestling, squealing clutches on the broad lawns.

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CrimethInc. Workers' Collective Bullet-in

Ahoy, fellow maximalists of the rock-n-roll persuasion. After a lot of talk and promises, our anarchist cookbook is finally in the layout process, and should be out just in time to be too late to equip protesters headed for this summer's Republican National Convention. That's too bad, so we've rushed this chapter to print here, in case any of you can put it to good use there or elsewhere. For more such recipes, free copies of our introductory anarchist paper *Fighting For Our Lives*, or to complain that we never cover music, only ways to break the law, contact us at CrimethInc. Sleeper Cell Number One, PO Box 2133, Greensboro, NC 27402 USA, or further alienate yourself from reality at www.crimethinc.com.

Going Undercover

Everyone is undercover. It's just a matter of degree. Look around—just about everybody you see is in disguise, terrified of being unmasked as the complex human beings they are. Wall Street's corporate murderers, after all, don't wear their murder suits when they take a vacation, nor do they wear their vacation suits when they're certain they're alone. Like shoplifters, stockbrokers wear certain things and act certain ways so they can move through a repressive social environment without arousing suspicion. Even in anarchist circles, many adopt certain conformist postures, though we'll save everyone the embarrassment of listing them here. If shoplifting a gallon of olive oil from a supermarket for your local Food not Bombs has become old hat, you may be ready for more involved undercover work. Do you find yourself wishing that a passerby would take advantage of his squeaky-clean look to do some truly dastardly revolutionary deed? It's time to become that squeaky-clean passerby yourself.

So everyone is an expert on acting; the distinction is that most are acting unconsciously, while the one who goes undercover does so deliberately to undermine the systems of control that necessitate acting and unconsciousness. A demonstration of thousands outside an evil institution can be given teeth by one undercover agent who asks an embarrassing question at the news conference, two agents who drop a banner from atop the building, three who switch off the lights during the meeting, or four who mash pies in the faces of the directors whenever they get up to speak. There are all sorts of places and groups to infiltrate, and a wide variety of reasons to do so—to gather intelligence, to spread disinformation, to create disruption. There are also different degrees of infiltration, and different extents to which it can be taken. Long-term infiltrators, sometimes called "moles," must be extra cautious, while short-term infiltrators can essentially burn their bridges after their job is done.

Getting In

Before attempting to infiltrate a group physically, learn as much as you can about it by means of the internet and libraries and asking around, being careful not to attract any attention to yourself in the process. It's amazing how much background a few internet searches can provide.

All the same, there are cultural details the internet won't provide. Just as we identify people from our own communities through minute details in their behavior and dress, every other social group from Nazis to business executives has its own codes of behavior and dress by which they recognize and assess each other. These details tend to be subtle: skinheads hint at their political views with the colors of their shoelaces, salesmen communicate their status through the obscure brand names of their watches. It's generally wiser not to attempt to camouflage yourself as a member of a social group whose intricate iconography

you don't thoroughly understand; if you don't know which color sheet to wear to the Klan rally, present yourself as a sympathetic journalist who wants to learn more. Best-case scenario, you or a friend once legitimately belonged to the demographic you are trying to infiltrate; for example, if you are trying to infiltrate a organization of right-wing politicians, the best person for the job would be someone who was brought up in a family with right-wing viewpoints and became an anarchist only later in life. In that case, many key words and signifiers would already be familiar to the infiltrator. Similarly, if you were trying to infiltrate a biotechnology conference, a dreadlocked punk rocker would probably suffer immediate expulsion, but a young college student with a background in biology could speak the lingo and pass as someone seeking a job with a biotech company.

To go undercover, you must dress and act in character. To the extent it is possible, dress as someone you could be comfortable being. If you are going undercover in a region unfamiliar to you, get your supplies and clothes there: dressed up and harmless in Boston actually looks nothing like dressed up and harmless in Texas. Going undercover can be expensive if it requires a new set of gear, especially if you are an impoverished revolutionary attempting to appear to be a respectable member of society. The suit, the car, the smell, these things are all important, and can be arranged given enough time and resources—but every civilian who goes undercover for work every day is trying to do so as cheaply as possible, just like you are, so it can be a challenge to afford the requisite commodities without making the standard compromises. Pawn shops and thrift stores often provide decent garb at affordable prices. Carry a prop: a clipboard for office environments, a wine glass for parties.

Spend time learning your character. If possible, don't use a completely fabricated identity unless you have a very good one. Instead, use the identity of someone you know of well, perhaps a friend who is comfortable with this. Get in character. Watch movies about your subject, talk to people about it. Pretend you are the best actor in the world, and you will eventually become so. A good rational cover story for your behavior, into which you can slip comfortably, is absolutely vital. Think through possible questions you might be asked. Get in character and try the character out in non-threatening situations—say, while hitchhiking. Remember, never volunteer any more information than necessary, but have possible stories ready so you're not caught tongue-tied by an embarrassing situation.

All social groups are essentially networks of who knows who; from Congress to your local drug-dealers, people operate in networks of trust. Once you've entered such a network, a whole horizon of new contacts opens before you. To get in, you need a "hook," some legitimate reason why you would be involved: if you're going into an office, your hook could be delivering a package; if you're gathering intelligence on a company, you could pretend to be a student writing a report about them. Drop names. You don't necessarily have to know the person whose name you drop—just make sure they're in a position of trust and respect within the network you're trying to infiltrate, and that, if you are lying, the person to whom you are lying can't easily determine this. Strike up conversation, subtly dropping in references that identify you as an insider. Always try to plunge one step deeper with your comments and questions, in what appears to be innocent chatter.

Lying

When you lie, there are telltale signs that many, particularly those well-versed in interrogation, can recognize: nervousness, motion of the eyes, reddening or touching of the face, tapping of the feet, a bit of sweat at the brow; therefore, the best lies are not lies at all, but half-truths. If you're undercover as a delivery man at the office of a major corporation and the security guard asks you what you're doing snooping around someone's desk, don't run or make up some tall tale about how you were good friends with that person back in high school. Instead, try something actually true, such as "I didn't expect to see you here—oh, I must be in the wrong office," then walk calmly off. After all, you are metaphysically in the wrong office, and you did not expect to see the security guard there.

If he grabs your shoulder, you may want to proceed to the next level, the reasonable lie. "I must have been given the wrong office number... I'm sorry." The key to a plausible lie is that it explains away irregularities. It should be simple and succinct. If the web of lies you weave becomes too intricate, you will be more likely to tell lies that are implausible or conflict with each other.

If the security guard demands to know "Who gave you the office number?", remember one of the golden rules of lying: be vague. "The guy up front," you explain. By being vague and ambiguous, you induce the person you are lying to interpret the lie in the way that makes the most sense according to the functionings of the world as he knows it. With any luck, the guard will interpret your statement as a reference to someone who legitimately gives out office numbers, such as a receptionist or boss.

If the clever guard suspects a ruse, he may ask for clarification. You should provide as little verifiable information as possible, while simultaneously making the best claim to legitimacy you can. Any reference to authority is a good source of legitimacy; God is the best one, in certain circles, but He's a bit too far out there for everyday lying purposes.

Never underestimate the power of sticking to your story. On the other hand, if the jig is finally up, it may make sense to surrender to the forces of the law without a struggle. If you're only gathering information, the law you actually broke is probably quite small; often, security guards will just kick you out of the building and tell you not to come back. Then again, if you can be tied to an act of hardcore property destruction that just took place, you'll want to put into action some of the tactics covered in the *Evasion* recipe.

Complications

If you're going undercover, you must appear to be normal come hell or high water—but when that becomes utterly impossible, you might as well try the opposite. If things are only slightly weird, people will tend to search for a logical explanation for events. If things are so strange that they are off the charts, people may do their best to ignore them—that's a standard response to cognitive dissonance, as psychology students learn. Accordingly, one should either be completely undercover, or, when one's cover is blown, go all the way. Once, while fleeing through the woods from riot police, a friend and I came to a road traversed by law-abiding civilians. At first, we pretended to be wholesome young hitchhikers, and everyone smiled but passed us by. Soon, the police were closing in, and our nervous behavior freaked out the one driver who nearly picked us up. Realizing that our situation was too desperate for any pretext, we frantically flagged down an old couple and explained to them that we were anarchist fugitives from the nearby anti-globaliza-

tion protest, who were being chased by the police as we spoke and needed a ride as far away as possible at this very moment. While at first stunned, they immediately let us in the car. Once inside, we normalized the situation by talking about the weather, and they dropped us off with a smile.

Another good rule of thumb: quit while you're ahead. If you have reason to believe that the situation is about to go horribly awry, get out. Don't fear being abrupt—just do it. If you think you just need to cool off, to check on some data or re-establish your security, make a brief and reasonable excuse, such as going to the bathroom or on a family vacation, depending on the time frame you're working with; in the moment of calm that provides, you can figure out where you stand, and whether you dare go back.

There are two types of people: those who have good intuitions, and those who do not. Through experience, ascertain which type you are, and rely accordingly on gut feelings or rational calculations. It is often useful to go undercover with at least one other person, so you can compare notes and balance out each other's fits of paranoia and delusions of invincibility. If you operate mainly by intuition, bring along a rational thinker, and vice versa. If you are working with a partner who is nervous or panicking under the stress, engage in small talk, tell a funny story, be relaxing to be around.

Speaking of having a partner, nothing makes for a good cover story like being in a generic love-struck heterosexual couple. This pretext enables everyone to assume they already know what you're up to, not to mention why your palms are sweaty and you keep whispering in each other's ears. And just what are you two doing atop the federal building, on this portentous night? "Oh, officer, I'm so sorry," you gush, cologne in the air and lipstick on your neck, "we just came up here to… admire the view!"

Counter-Surveillance

Counter-surveillance is the game of spying on spies. Any group that has valuable secrets has a stake in defending itself against infiltration. The amount of security depends on the type of organization: a supermarket might only have a security guard and a few cameras; a right-wing hate group might have a group of bruisers to defend its turf, and probably makes a practice of keeping up with the websites of hostile organizations; the government has nearly infinite resources for counter-surveillance, and may well know a lot about you, whether or not they've yet had occasion to make use of that information. If the secret service thinks you have lots of guns and are preparing for armed struggle, they are likely to burn your house down with your children inside; if you are just causing minor disturbances by wheatpasting posters and Reclaiming the occasional Street, they probably won't care enough to track you down, although their counter-surveillance and counter-insurgency measures can be shockingly arbitrary. When in doubt, be careful.

There are things you can do to trick infiltrators into revealing themselves. Send out an announcement about a blatantly fabricated demonstration over a list-serv, and take note of who shows up. Bait fascists; insult them, and learn what you can from their angry responses. Take circuitous routes when driving, so you can't be followed without it being obvious. Before trying something really sketchy, do something moderately sketchy to see if you get caught for it. Never look directly at someone you suspect of following you. If you know you are being observed and you do not wish to let on that you know, pick your nose, talk to yourself, do something harmless but embarrassing.

Timing when to act on the information you glean from infiltration is also a fine art. Often spy intelligence, like revenge, is best served cold—not right after you have garnered it, when it could give away that you were the one who did so. Hold on to information until the connection to you is implausible, until telltale data is cleared from surveillance videotapes and short-term memories. In some situations, if the intelligence is needed immediately or you feel you are in danger, it might make sense to broadcast whatever information you have to as many people as possible, obscuring the source from which it came. Otherwise, keep what you know a secret and use it only when needed.

Deep Cover

In addition to single-goal infiltration missions, it can be worthwhile to position yourself in a milieu in order to obtain intelligence over a long period of time. The continual practice you get from being a long-term mole will keep your undercover abilities in top condition; however, as time passes and access to information increases, so do the chances of being caught, so weigh carefully how far it's worth going. Often, especially in the case of political groups, it is enough to join list-servs and go to meetings; never neglect the small things, like the visit to the bar after the group you are monitoring finishes its more serious business. To build up trust, unassumingly do the jobs noboby else wants to do. If you are particularly ambitious and gutsy, you can even attempt to obtain a position of authority; with this, you can easily induct other members into the group. Think of the havoc you can wreak if you build up trust and responsibility within a group over a long period until the perfect moment arrives!

At some point in your life you may have to go undercover and never emerge: this is called going underground, and we can't tell you anything about it except that it is emotionally taxing and rarely ends well. You may want to adopt temporarily the behavior appropriate to someone going underground, however, in order to carry out a project that you do not want linked to you, such as a direct action resulting in lots of financial damages and a likely investigation. In such a case, always pay cash for food, hotel rooms, and other expenses, so there will be no check or credit card trail. Don't use a gas card, either, or a personal phone card, or a cell phone registered to your name. Rent or borrow a car, if you don't want your vehicle's motions to be tracked. Obey the little laws: don't risk getting caught for speeding or jaywalking before or after robbing a bank. Move within faceless masses, or far from the madding crowd and the surveillance cameras that attend it—never in between. Give your credit cards and cell phone to a friend to make a misleading paper trail far away, if you're ready to back that alibi up under scrutiny. When you go undercover, you should be like Santa Claus: you have a mission, you're never seen, and you're in and out with the cookies and soymilk before anyone knows what happened.

Account

While I'm not exactly the most organized of revolutionaries, I knew something had to be done when I got wind that a group of fascists were having their national conference just a few hours away. The Anti-Racist Action e-mail list-serv to which I subscribe announced that the Council of Conservative Citizens was having their national meeting just down the road from my hometown. The Council of Conservative Citizens was the above-ground political organ of the racist ultra-right wing, known for wining and dining senators and holding public anti-immigrant rallies. Historically, they were

descended from the White Citizens' Councils that were set up to oppose integration and aid the Klan. This was an opportunity to make their work more difficult, but it came with a hitch: while the webpage to which the email had directed me announced what city the meeting was in, it also proclaimed "Because of extremist Lefties, the exact location of our meeting will only be announced to members." "Lefty" or not, I was one extremist who would not be put off. Clearly, I had to join the Council, and to do this I had only one month to transform myself from a black-clad scraggly anarchist into a passable good-ole-boy racist.

Luckily, I was born and bred a Southerner. My family on one side was descended from farmers and cops, full of women named Bonnie—I even had an Uncle Buddy. I had spent my childhood going around to Civil War re-enactments dressed as a miniature Confederate solider, and worshipping at a back-to-the-roots apocalyptic church in which the United Nations were regarded as the Anti-Christ and the black helicopters were spoken of more often than Jesus' love of all His little children. I had been fortunate enough to come of age in a multi-racial neighborhood, which gave me the perspective to realize that some of my parent's viewpoints about race were unwholesome and uninformed. All the same, whenever I spent enough time with my older aunts and uncles, who were former tobacco farmers with Southern accents as thick as grits, I could not only talk the talk, but talk it with the proper accent! I may be a raging anti-fascist anarchist, but I'm also a Southerner by the Grace of... hm, let's not say God, but definitely genealogy. Anyway, I did what every self-respecting revolutionary would have done: I went home and hung out with my family for a few days.

I spent an afternoon catching up with an old friend from my pre-radical high school days, who was working construction. It happened that he looked more or less like me. Despite my best attempts, he still had some ideas that I considered mildly racist—"I don't mind Mexicans, but there's so many of them coming over the border it makes it tough for me"—but even mildly racist people often bear a deep and abiding hatred of fascist groups like the Klan. When I confided to him that I was trying to infiltrate a group of Neo-Nazis and Klan members, he was down to play a supporting role. He was too busy at work to take time off to help me infiltrate personally, so I asked if I could use his name, and possibly his address or ID if it was absolutely necessary. He agreed, on the condition that I promise not to bring too much heat down on him. Presto, an instant new identity: I was now "Bob Noble" (names changed to protect the innocent). A simple, unpretentious name, and not even imaginary. Remember, your enemies will often do a background check on you, or at least see if you exist in the phone book.

The Council of Conservative Citizens had a national contact number listed on their website. Since there was still a month to go, a call to it by a complete stranger would not be a dead give-away that anti-racists were trying to infiltrate their conference, so I gave them a ring. After a few rings, an answering machine picked up and asked for my name and phone number. I was not interested in leaving my friend's contact information on the answering machine of hate-mongers, and as I was calling from a pay-phone at a deserted gas-station, Caller ID could have blown my cover quite easily. So I started out with a grumbly drawl: "Well, I've just been reading your web page for a long time and I agree with your views, especially those about states' rights and freedom of speech, and I was wondering..."

As if by magic, the phone was picked up on the other end, and a not-so-Southern voice addressed me: "Oh, sorry about that, we screen our calls. You know, there's a lot of wackos out there." I had used a key phrase that the mysterious racist on the other end of the line had recognized, one that many born-and-bred liberals would never know to attach much significance to: "states' rights." This is the idea that States and other local authorities should have more control than the federal government, which according to standard racist mythology is infested with Jews, homosexuals, liberals, and even black people. According to neo-Confederates, "states' rights"—not slavery—is the reason the South seceded from the Union, and as this is barely mentioned in history classes or leftist periodicals, only a true Southerner would use that word in everyday conversation. Also, freedom of speech, in particular the freedom to be a racist, sexist, and generally vile spewer of right-wing madness, is of great concern to this crowd. My use of these key words led to almost immediate acceptance.

"I know, I know, they don't respect a man's God-given right to speak his mind."

"So, what did you want?"

Now, here was a critical moment. I could have asked directly for the location of the conference. That would have been far too obvious. It was wiser to put off demanding the actual information I wanted and just ask for a local contact, who might be less security-conscious. "Can I get a local phone number of someone to call to talk about how to take a more active role? I've been reading too long, and after what those terrorists did to us on September 11th, it's time for Americans like me to take a stand."

Within a few seconds I had the local phone numbers of Council of Conservative Citizens members in my area, and the name of the high-ranking Council member who had talked to me on the phone. After a polite goodbye, I made another phone call to my local contact. He wasn't home. So I called another, and another. I kept getting answering machines; racists love to screen their calls. The next time an answering machine engaged, I finally spoke: "Well, I just talked to Mr. [name of high-ranking racist previously mentioned], and he gave me your number. I've been reading y'all's web pages, and I really enjoy the Alamance Independent..."

Bang. The receiver on the other end picked up. The name-dropping, combined with a reference to an obscure right-wing paper available online, had got me the next contact on my hit list. Now I was part of the right-wing scene!

"How ya doing? Sorry about that, I just sometimes am slow picking up the phone..."

Sure. Jeez, I wish anarchists had this measure of security culture on picking up phones. Given that, the ball was now in my playing field.

"Ah, I'm just wondering about how to get involved. I mean, I've never been much on getting involved in politics, since I'm not a fancy type of man and always feel a bit confused about things myself."

"That's how it is in these confusing times."

"But, I dunno... I just don't feel right about the way this country is going. Why, people are even insulting President Bush, and after what happened in New York, why, we're under attack and these damn liberals keep trying to stop our good President from doing his job. And it seems like even our leaders are forgetting about states' rights."

"Have you read the latest article on the web about how the liberals with their

left-wing agenda are demonizing us?"

"Sure... I always read your website. That's why I'm calling you. I've never... well, I was in the Sons of the Confederacy, and I did do some re-enacting for a few years back in [name of state even more southern than the one I live in], you know at Gettysburg, Bensonville, Spotsylvania... yeah, those were good old times, but it was just kids' stuff. I want to get serious about defending this country."

"You know, one of the biggest problems we face is immigration..." My host began an impassioned tirade on how immigrants were ruining our nation.

"Well, I'm not racist, I've never considered myself a racist man." It's always good when infiltrating a group to come off as an honest, multi-faceted, and even moderate human being, instead of some caricature of a white-hooded Klansman. "But I do know that if these people are here illegally, that's wrong, and I'm not in their country taking their jobs or nothing. I mean, compared to blacks, these immigrants are growing even faster... there's no reason they shouldn't have to go through the same procedures as the rest of us citizens."

Our conversation went on and on. After referencing obscure historical trivia ("You know, the first slave ship landed in the North, in Marblehead, Massachusetts") and confessing to bizarre fetishes ("I've always wanted a red shirt like our good Confederate general A.P. Hill"), I had so thoroughly won the favor of this local fascist that he invited me over to meet him at a bar for a few beers. I could almost see him salivating as he tried to turn my "honest" confusions to a more racist and fascist stance. Being a "quiet man," I refused his offer of beer for the time being, and asked him if there was some C. of C.C. event I could meet him at. I was hoping I wouldn't personally be required there, since as a fairly well-known anarchist, it would be riskier for me than it might be for someone else. Also, since this was an opportunity to slip in a long-term mole, I made sure to give him no exact physical description of myself.

"Well, it's a bit of a drive, but there's this national conference coming up. I think you would really enjoy it, and we can hang out there."

"Can I just get the thing off your website?"

"Oh no. We gotta hide it from all those commies. But I'll tell you. It's at..."

Bingo. Mission accomplished. Never ask them for the information directly if you can avoid it. Have them give it to you out of their own free will. It will be a lot less suspicious.

A few days later, I sent out e-mails to nearby Anti-Racist Action chapters announcing this location and calling for a demonstration outside. I'd waited a few days so that the fascists, if they were monitoring our list-serv, wouldn't necessarily connect the A.R.A. announcement to the strange new guy who'd called them up. As wiser and more experienced anti-racist activists started planning the demonstration, I decided we could do better than demonstrate outside. We should not only be on the outside, we should be inside.

I sent a few e-mails and hung up fliers around town announcing the formation of a new chapter of Anti-Racist Action. Right before the meeting, a strange older white guy showed up. I got somewhat scary vibrations from him. He asked if he was at the right meeting location. Trusting my instincts, I told him I didn't know and that the bookstore the meeting was to be at was about to close, so he left—and just in the nick of time. Soon afterwards, about half a dozen people showed up, an interesting mixture of young white punks, black students, and one older white Southern woman. Although I was also a bit hesitant about this woman, who fit none of my cultural stereotypes of anti-racist activists, I followed my instincts again, and decided to take the risk. It turned out she was a graduate student, writing her Ph.D. thesis on the radical right and anti-racism in our state. I told everyone about the counter-demonstration, and after she recommended a few good books about the history of the Council of Conservative Citizens and the Klan to me, I decided to visit her in her office.

After some chit-chat, I popped the question. While we were outside demonstrating, would she mind dressing up and going inside the conference as our undercover spy, complete with camera and audio recorder? She was thrilled. After years of studying the detrimental effects of racism in society, she could actually strike back. While the young kids were out there fighting or at least intimidating the racists, she could sneak in and do the more subtle but necessary intelligence gathering: she could get the names, faces, and personal details of every would-be white warrior there. All of her attributes—age, sex, harmless appearance—would be advantages in this situation, and her encyclopedic knowledge of the far right would make her nearly undetectable as an anti-racist spy. Her cover story would be that she was the wife of the character I had played during my earlier conversations. Later that day, she called up my previous local Council of Conservative Citizens contact and registered for the conference.

The day of the conference, we all met up in a parking lot before heading off for our separate tasks. Our undercover agent was dressed as the very picture of the genteel Southern woman, complete with broad-rimmed hat and a little umbrella with floral patterns. She took all the surveillance equipment, and we drove to the event separately. She arrived earlier than us, in order to disassociate herself from the activities outside.

When we got to the location, a remarkably nondescript beige building beside a highway, I shuddered to think that a hotbed of white supremacy could be hidden behind such a bland exterior. In the parking lot, the race war was already beginning. A few older white men, with the help of police officers, were holding off a small horde of anti-racist activists. Both sides were throwing insults, with the protesters being called things as dated as "race mongrels" and "communists," and throwing equally vindictive vituperation back in return. The one thing that really seemed to terrify the racists was when one A.R.A. member took out his video camera and started getting everyone's license plate numbers.

As they screamed at the "dirty Jew," he laughed and continued to videotape them, daring them to step a bit closer to prove their "racial superiority." Another anti-racist activist told the white homophobes that all their rude talk was exciting him, and he had always wanted to make out with a real honest to life Nazi; they seemed so revolted by this prospect a few actually fled. The ruckus was loud and went on for several hours, until finally the conference dragged to its end and large numbers of racists started leaving, sneaking by our video camera into the parking lot.

Little did they suspect the spy within their ranks. At our next meeting, she presented all the information she had managed to smuggle out of the conference. She had gotten inside without anyone blinking an eye, and audio-taped all the workshops, which ranged from a biblical case against racial mixing to a denial that the Holocaust ever happened. She had taken pictures of the various leaders of the conference, including not only

Council members but also various Klansmen and neo-Nazis. She had approached many of them and obtained personal contact information including phone numbers and both e-mail and street addresses. She had collected armloads of their literature and even a few magazine subscriptions. As we reviewed the photographs and hours of video and audio footage, making meticulous notes and working out who was friends with whom, it became apparent that we had indeed established the identities of most of the people there and had valuable leads on the new campaigns of the extreme right. As we arranged our files to be delivered to the Anti-Racist Action headquarters, we congratulated ourselves on a job well done. Who knows, maybe next time I will meet the Council of Conservative Citizens at a bar, after all—and bring along all my friends for a barroom brawl they'll never forget!

Digression's got a hold of me

I've spent most of the 22 years on this planet in front of a little thing Alexander Graham Bell invented called "the television." Now I'm not a gambling man, but if I were I would be willing to bet most of the people within my age group have spent their pre-natal, post-infant, toddler, prepubescent, teenage, and young adult life in front of this monstrosity called television (hereby referred to as "TV") I don't mean to assign any negative connotations to this. God forbid I tell you irritable little trolls how to live your lives. You know, you all could use a little discipline now and then. Perhaps then I could get a decent night's sleep without some beard-having, puppeteering, clown tolerating, hobo-punks tugging on my coat-tails on my daily walk through the fine streets of Pittsburgh, begging for scraps of bread. Well I'm sorry; I have no bread for you. Perhaps if I had some dignity I could spare some of that, but for now please get your curry stained hands off of me. But I digress...

As I was saying, I've spent a perverse amount of time feeding myself hours upon hours of T.V. shows such as *The Jeffersons* (RIP Isabel Sanford) and *The Erotic Adventures of Disney's Aladdin* (RIP Gilbert Gottfried). I like to lump the producers of these shows into the same category as those foul smelling beasts loitering at around our nation's public zoos. One can tell they have only their interests in mind as they hurl their fecal products at you—figuratively and literally—for the sake of stuffing their coffers, turning us all into ill-tempered zombies desperately in need of baths and reassurance.

And as I sit here, desperately grasping at some semblance of a column, I cannot help but think of all the things punk rock lacks that TV makes up for. I cannot help but think this is why mainstream America—nay, *the world*—looks down upon us as if we were a conglomeration of malodorous chimps flinging our own excrement at each other. This may or may not be closely connected to the punks' severe lack of discipline as described above, but it has more to do with our general lack of entertainment value.

I may receive a lot of heat for this, but this is where www.conservativepunk.com has got www.liberalpunk.org beat. You say there is no such thing as www.liberalpunk.org? Well, therein lies the problem. You see, that was a joke. Not a very funny joke admittedly, but what's done is done and I cannot change that. "But Mantooth," you say, "you can simply use the backspace button on your keyboard!" No! There is no time! Thorn said he wanted this by tomorrow and I shan't disappoint. Besides, my keyboard is devoid of both backspace and delete buttons ever since I tore them off in a fit of egomaniacal rage.

The point is that conservativepunk.com thinks of itself, no doubt on some creepy, oedipal level, as a sort of TV show with its own plot and cast of characters to hurl at you ala some scatological metaphor ala scatological propoganda. Until this point "our" punk has been on the defensive, when it should be on the offensive. You may be thinking to yourself, "Good gravy, this sounds like another nonsensical pipedream and a poorly veiled vehicle for another shitty column." But you, *yes you*, are wrong. *Dead wrong*. To prove this, allow me to introduce some suggestions culled from the ranks of TV programs as proof of my irrefutable seriousness.

1) **Slogan:** Too long has punk gone without some sort of unified slogan to appeal to the brutish masses. Sure, we've had "Hey, Ho, Let's Go," "Punk is Dead," "Punk's Not Dead," and "They Saved Hitler's Cock," but for brevity's sake, mine is a whole lot better. Now this is, of course, open for workshopping, but I think it could go along the lines of: Hardcore Punk—We'll Make Ya Smile! Underneath said slogan would be a picture of Ace Frehley, mostly because the average Joe can relate to this KISS member most easily, and his solo record was by far the best out of those other four. Hell, it might be the best KISS record!

2) **Wacky Neighbors:** Think of the most popular TV shows in history. *Seinfeld, Family Matters, Cheers, CHIPS*, etc. etc. What do all of them have in common? Zany neighbors that pop in to lighten the mood and teach us all how to love again! If the Internet is capable of measuring anything, it's that the punks are in serious need of a diaper change. This might be my prescription whiskey talking, but these folks need to be shot and perhaps put into barrels containing highly corrosive substances. What we need is more comic relief. We aren't getting that with all these gloomy pictures of starving children on record sleeves, scary silhouettes of dastardly birds, or cartoons of ejaculating penises riding skateboards. This is not wacky. Wacky is someone like Negative Tom who chooses to be on tour precisely one-jazzillion days a year. And if you don't think there are a jazzillion days in a year or even if the word "jazzillion" is made up, please refer to my comment about the missing status of my delete button and Emperor Thorn breathing down my back. His hot breath, albeit kind of erotic, is no less menacing. The point is: Be more like Tom.

3) **Duplicitous friendships:** There is a serious deficit of backstabbing and shit talking inherent in many daytime soap operas that I feel punk could really benefit from. Oh wait...

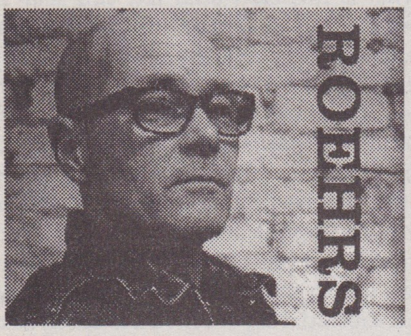
4) **Telethons:** The purpose of the telethon is to get your hard earned cash. What is this cash used for, you ask? To benefit the organization holding the telethon, you quivering lummox! Usually, telethons are held by people like Jerry Lewis who use it to molest the very foundations of your soul. Others benefit children with muscular disorders that necessitate the use of emoticons such as L. So why can't punk hold a telethon? I constantly hear punks talk about how expensive it is to start a DIY show space or put out a record. I say we hold a telethon so to benefit the punk scene. We could hire scene superstars such as Felix Havoc to answer telephones. Chris Dodge could MC the event. And why hold just one? Perhaps approximately one-jazzilion?

After we stuff our coffers with fresh green-backs, we can unnecessarily hyphenate words and the more hippy-minded folk can hold telethons benefiting the proliferation of ass-flaps, or aiding the victims of major tragedy via an endless conveyor belt of sparkle-eyed celebrities making calculated appeals for your money.

5) **Sweeps Week:** Every year, for approximately one week, all the major television networks arbitrarily decide to inject into their programs the most asinine and insane plots, gimmicks, and characters in hopes "sweeping" the ratings from their competition. The reasons behind this are shrouded in mystery; a mystery only the fabulous Dr. Who can unravel. But since life is not fair, he is not here to help us. Instead we should embrace this age-old tradition. For example, this year we could kill off one of our most popular punk bands, say NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS, in hopes of gaining some attention back from Jerry and the Republipunks. Next season we could all wake up and find the members of NHFTKs in our shower and everything will be hunky-dory. Furthermore, we could use some crazy plot twists or rumors. Perhaps some rumors about INFEST getting back together and, say, Pig Champion filling in on guitar! And it wouldn't be Sweeps Week without *sex*. Now let's face it, we aren't the easiest groups of counter-culturites to look at. So we should use some of that telethon money to recruit some twenty-something heartthrobs to fill in for some of our more aesthetically challenged high school punks.

5) **Reruns of M.A.S.H.**: Just do what I say.

So there you have it. Stay tuned next month for more hokum displays of cumbersome adjectives and confusing syntax.



HONOR BOUND

Yes! NUTS & BOLTS, Oakland, California's skinhead sons, have their debut CD on the street now! The new self-titled ten-song skinhead street noise CD is produced Orlando Xavier and the music is first rate!

NUTS & BOLTS start off rocking hard with "Solitude." Jagger sings: "I'm a fighter, I'll never fall / I'm a soldier, I won't die / Never die for you…." Hell yes! The next song churns right into your brain with words about how West Oakland went from a prosperous working class shipping and receiving area to a place where "rock" drug trade rules. A very good song! Song number three is fucking great! "Honor Bound" starts off with a melodic riff and then crashes into a powerful skinhead anthem—read these lyrics: "You destroyed our bond in trust / Crushed our innocent dreams/ Stole our pride and dignity / Now we're here to claim what is our own from you / Our honor has been stripped not gained / We're honor bound / We've set our sails, ain't looking back / We're honor bound / It's our turn to attack / We're honor bound / We've set our sails, ain't looking back / We're honor bound / It's our turn to drop the bomb / Respect is what we try to pay / It's hard with no return from those of you who lack in heart / Now integrity's been lost from within you / You're vain attempts have proved no use / You tried to take from us the only cause that keeps apart / Our pride, our honor, our dignity / It's something you can't have for free / And we will stand and fight / We'll stand together / We must unite / Honor bound!" Fucking 'A! That song is great! The guitars of Lynnea and Diogo clobber you! The bass and drums of Justin and Nick are fucking awesome!!!

Next, you get "Destiny," a skinhead love song. "I always knew there was one for me / Out in this world with their arms empty / Destined someday to have their dreams come true." This is a very nice song! Song number five is "Big Boy Barbecue:" "Chasing girls and drinking brews / Kick your teeth is what we do / We won't be your fascist youth!" Hell yes! Song number six is "Dawn of the Snake," about the Jeckel and Hyde result from drinking alcohol. "As the venom seeps inside / There ain't no remedy / Sense and reason have lost control / The snake's controlling me….My drink identity." Yes!

"Down and Out," illustrates how life can have twists and turns—one bad decision—one spot of bad luck—and you are "down and out." Read these lyrics: "It's another day after from where you once were / Just another man's laughter of the life you have learned / To him, it's the only way to live in this world / To him, it's the only way in this godforsaken world / Down and out in the city streets / From rock and roll whiskey / With nowhere to go, no one to be / Lost his hopes and memories / He sits and wonders why / Why was it me / This man's last chance to put up a fight / This man's last hours to say this goodnights / He's gone away from us to his reality / Returned to god no postage in need"

Song number eight is "Government Gangsters," about those city and country employees who are sworn to "Serve and Protect" and how they abuse their powers. Read the words to "Government Gangsters:" "Government gangsters plotting for you / Running the streets in squads of blue / Breaking laws they made for you / Know your rights before they're read to you / Government gangsters authority rules / Controlling the media from me and you / Making up lies to hide the truth / Look through your eyes not through theirs / Government gangsters! / Another night you're handcuffed and thrown to the ground / There's no more use for screaming / These gangsters rule this town / Now they sit and they laugh as they run your record through / They're blood thirsty vultures and they're hunting for you." Fuck yes!

NUTS & BOLTS have a very successful CD on their hands! Song number nine is "What I Am," about how as a man grows up and embraces the skinhead life living with pride and dignity and "giving thanks every day I wake." Song number ten is "Happy Without Pills" with strong sentiments. "The day that I was blessed / Friends for life / I was spoken to / Now I see the light shining through / Friends who stand by me / The ones who've been tried and true"—another great song from Oakland's NUTS & BOLTS!! Let your CD spin for a couple more minutes and you get to hear a secret NUTS & BOLTS song – a demo version of an early song by NUTS & BOLTS!

NUTS & BOLTS are the skinhead band to keep your eye on—these guys are going to be around! Look for NUTS & BOLTS playing in your town to support their new CD! Order your NUTS & BOLTS CD through the band at 4043 Piedmont Ave, #24, Oakland, CA 94611; www.nutsandboltsoakland.net.

THE SUBJECTS from Southern California have contributed five songs to a three-band compilation on Chicken Head Records. THE SUBJECTS recorded this material at Stress Studios in North Hollywood, California.

Nate (vocals), Martin (guitar), Dan (bass), and Lou (drums) lay down some good streetpunk on this disc. THE SUBJECTS start off with "Idiot Driver," which has a good STIFF LITTLE FINGERS feel to it. There's solid singing with strong guitar support. Next up is "One Day," with some positive thoughts about pulling one up by their bootstraps. Read these lyrics: "One day I'm gonna get what's mine / One day, I'm gonna take what's mine / Just you wait and see / All the things that come to me / One day, it'll be all mine / Right now I'm face down on the ground / My stuff is in boxes out your front door / Just you wait and see for all the shitty things you've done to me / One day you'll wish you were mine / I'm getting pushed around no more / I'm gonna kick down your door / Say goodbye to my old life. Bad luck won't haunt me no more."

Song number three from THE SUBJECTS is "Train Wreck." This tune has some good thoughts about rising above one's situation. Read the words to "Train Wreck:" "Here we come, we're here to liberate / Cause it's not worth living off an empty plate / Got your suicidal on a runaway train / And you can ride for free, if you can play the game / No one out there knows it, but we're losing the fight / We got to make decisions, got to make them tonight / What difference / There's no difference in what you're selling because I get it for free / I know the world is falling down around my feet / And the only difference between you and me is that all you care about is things you need / And it's worth changing / You can't build me up so you can break me down / Fuck your advice I gonna stand my ground / And your only fucking with the master plan / So it's not worth changing / Fall down / We keep climbing / Yea we can't be stopped / We'll know our destination when we get to the top / Some trials might cut us deep enough to scar / But there's no use pretending when we know who we are / We won't be giving in to less irritate / Until you bend your rules and seize to complicate "

The next song supplied by THE SUBJECTS is the strongest tune on the CD. The gruff vocals and stinging guitar chords combine for maximum effect on "Johnny Crime." Check out the lyrics to this opus: "Johnny was born into a life of crime / When he was born his dad was doing time / His mother's on the street trying to make ends meet / He didn't have a chance, he was already beat / Johnny Crime, doing time / His luck won't last / He'll go down with a blast / Always ditching school / Yea, he's no fool / Johnny's always making his own rules / Slinging this and thieving that / Selling dope / Don't take no crap / In and out of Juvey, like a swinging door / Poor Johnny Crime could never do no more / One day, Johnny robbed a liquor store / He knew the job was screwed when he walked through the door / He saw the clerk's gun out the corner of his eye / He knew right then that someone would die / Shit went down / Shots rang out / Poor Johnny Crime went down with a shout / Johnny Crime, doing time / His luck didn't last / He went down with a blast / We lost Johnny that cold dark night / Two bullets in his chest from his final fight / Crime was the only thing that he knew / What else was Johnny Crime to do / Johnny never walked the straight and narrow line / He always found it easier just to do the time / He robbed from the rich and then he robbed from the poor / He robbed from his friends until he had no more / He always felt better with the green in his hands / Johnny felt that money really made him a man / Johnny, Johnny Crime." Fuck yes! That's good shit!

The last number provided by THE SUBJECTS is "On the Run." Read these words: "Dad's down the street / Swinging his belt / He wants to give me the worst whipping I've ever felt / So I run / Sitting at the dentist hear a screaming child / I'm our the door and down the hall, my fears gone wild / Run / I've got no where to go / Got nuthin but a lot to do / My life's not over yet and I'm on the run again / The teachers always mocking me about the way I dress / I'm throwing chairs and desks and always making a mess / So I run / Yea, the IRS is hounding me / It's tax time / I'm under paid and over drawn / I haven't a dime / Run! / I've got no where to go / Got nuthin but a lot to do / My life's not over yet and I'm on the run again / Why does it seem that I'm always on the run?"

The other two bands on this Chicken Head Records compilation are female fronted punk band, VARANT MAJARIAN, with thirteen songs, collectively entitled *Superior Hygiene Through Hardcore*, and rough hewn hardcore outfit ABANDON ALL HOPE from Albuquerque, New Mexico doing "Fuck You and The Mullet You Rode In On"; "Friendship Bracelet"; "I Bought You a Dozen Roses"; and "Hell Is A Nice Place To Visit, But You Wouldn't Want To Live There." Get in touch with THE SUBJECTS through Chicken Head Records, PO Box 371147, Reseda, CA 91337; www.chickenhead-records.com.

TEXAS TERRI has outdone herself on her new TKO record!!! This hard-rocking lady has taken STOOGES riffs to the highest level possible! The new LP is called TEXAS TERRI BOMB *Your Lips My Ass* and this shit rocks like crazy!! "Demon Boy Don Cilurso, Wayne Kramer, Dave Teague and Marc Diamond make guest appearances on guitar, but the real treat here is TEXAS TERRI LAIRD and those amazing vocal chords of hers!

The production on this disc kicks ass! Texas Terri slams through fourteen rockers including: "Brain Explosion," "One Hit Wonder," "Dirty Action," "Never Shut Up," "Oh Yeah!," "Strike 3," "Dream Wrecker," "Raunch City," "Mafia," "To the Top," "Love Hates Me," "I Got a Right," "The Rocker," and "Rock & Roll All Nite / Turn It Off!." The new version of TEXAS TERRI AND THE STIFF ONES crowd pleaser, "Oh Yeah!" is a winner! TEXAS TERRI gives her screaming cover versions of "I Got A Right" (by JAMES OSTERBERG) and "The Rocker" (by PHIL LYNOTT). All the great elements of those early Chrissy Hynde or Patti Smith albums are present and accounted for. TEXAS TERRI is at the peak of her powers! Go see this lady when you get a chance! TEXAS TERRI puts on a spectacular show! Buy the new TKO Record and prepare to rock out! Contact TEXAS TERRI at PO Box 349, Los Angeles, CA 90078; www.texasterri.com. Write to TKO Records at 3126 W. Cary St #303, Richmond, VA 23221; www.tkorecords.com.

Until next month- See you at the bar!

Well, it looks as though introductions are in order, so here it goes. My name is Golnar, and I am the new co-coordinator here at Maximumrocknroll. I moved out here for the job from New York City;. more specifically, I lived in East Williamsburg in the Northern part of Brooklyn. Before last week I had only spent 5 days in the Bay area in my whole

life; despite the fact that even now I haven't spent much more time here than that, it is beginning to sink in that this is the place I now call home. It's my fifth night here in the MRR compound, and though my eyes are a bit sore from trying to figure out Quark all afternoon, it seems that things are going pretty well so far. At least, it's hard not to feel welcomed by the STATE CHILDREN flexi that I am listening to as I write this. You know what they say, home is where the rare international punk records are. Or at least it is now.

Moving across the country is a pretty intimidating process no matter what the circumstances, especially when coupled with the immediate responsibility of learning how to co-coordinate the world's longest running punk fanzine. In general, I have avoided cataclysmic change in my life, preferring instead to enjoy the natural ebbs and flows of life in Brooklyn. In my last weeks in New York I tried frantically to revisit and re-experience everything that I love about that city, as well as to explore all of the things that I have meaning to see but put off. Of course, I fell miserably short of my goals, as New York is far too expansive to be neatly tucked into a few weeks' time. I made it to Coney Island one last time, but didn't get a chance to say goodbye to the Brooklyn Bridge, the Cloisters, or the vegan soul food place in cental Harlem that I love. Oh well, c'est la vie.

I did, however, spend a lot of time riding my bike around and savoring the familiarity of the streets, knowing that soon "familiarity" would be the main thing missing from my life. It has been a relatively mild summer in New York, so nighttime rides were particularly pleasant. Manhattan Avenue, where I could ride north from my apartment and click off street names one by one until the end of Brooklyn is now thousands of miles away, while here in San Francisco I am not sure I even know which way north is yet. Still, I feel excited and eager to work on MRR. After all, how could I not be? This magazine first reached my hands when I was still a wee girl of 13 just starting to learn about punk rock. That issue totally blew my mind. Who were those bands?! How was I supposed to find them?! Reading that MRR was totally dumbfounding, but nonethless incredibly exciting. I had heard Black Flag and Minor Threat already, but as far as really connecting to the international punk underground *Maximum Rocknroll* gave me a place to start. It only seems fitting, then, that I would leave behind the immediate comfort of the familiar streets and friendly faces of New York for this zine. After all, punk rock has always functioned in my life like in so many others lives as a sort of surrogate home, a place to always feel welcome to be myself. In this sense, despite the distance I've travelled I haven't gone anywhere at all.

There are other things I could tell you about myself but this ain't a frikkin resume so I won't bore you with facts and figures. But since I can't resist, and I bet you're wondering, here are some bands that I like: VOID, THE WIPERS, ANTI-CIMEX, HARUM SCARUM, FRAMTID, BGK, THE GERMS, POST REGIMENT, JERRY'S KIDS, YOUNG WASTENERS, BATTALION OF SAINTS, DEATHREAT, MARTYRDOD, RAW POWER, ANGRY SAMOANS, PAGANS, and THE FIX. Of course that's not all, but it's a start.

Another wasteD NIGHT with MIKE THORN

It's six in the morning and I can just barely make out the sound of the trucks from the construction company doing their morning routine of filling the street for way to many minutes—engines idling while their drivers pound coffee and exchange smart ass remarks. I normally don't get up this early, but lately my chronic insomnia has me fully in its clutches. Its of the weird sorts, falling asleep is totally easy, its just staying that way that is the problem—I've discussed it before so I won't bore you with it again—though lately it has been playing into my favor. Or at least in favor of being quite productive with working on *Maximum Rocknroll*. By 7 am I'm in front of the computer, answering emails in a not-enough-coffee-and-still-half-asleep haze. I spend a good amount of time wondering why people send us the emails that they do—I mean really, who in their right mind would think that *MRR* would care about the new William Shatner record? I mean maybe Lance Hahn might care about it, but he lives in Austin now and so I quickly hit the delete button and on to the next bizarre inquiry.

This time it's from some gentleman wondering if he should let his fourteen year old daughter go to see MUGA and TOMORROW at Gilman and if it is a safe place for her to see bands. I'm tempted to respond with some sort of tirade about how "safe" is a relative term, and how it is certainly safer than the places I saw shows at when I was fourteen and how he needs to realize that if his kid wants to get loaded on cheap beer, she will, regardless of any sort of efforts to keep her from doing so. Instead I chicken out, writing back some reassuring note about Gilman being a safe, drug, alcohol and violence free space. Totally blocking from my memory the recent straight-edgers versus drunk punx brawl at the DROPDEAD show or the countless numbers of beer filled coffee cups which punx grip with the glee of getting away with something. Better to assist her in her quest towards punkness than to help her father nip it in the bud—but it got me thinking.

Punk is so huge right now—that is if by punk you mean Warp tour, package tours, marketing campaigns, public relations agencies, booking agents, selling your songs to MTV television shows, "fanzines" which only serve to fellatio the egos of "indie" record labels which in turn are just farm teams for major labels and so on and so forth. Is then punk, nearly thirty years after the initial bomb blast, now just a marketing tool for cool? Just another rebellious youth culture template for you to plug into during your teenage years and eventually grow out of once you've started on your career?

A culture to be bought and sold? Hell, you don't even have to leave it behind anymore, you can use it; sell it, to your advantage—be the punk guy at your office. The hip guy in touch with the youths, instead of dreaming of burning the office to the ground and stringing up your boss by his necktie. Is that our victory? Punk as an image, a sound and nothing more?

But where is the danger? Where is the real rebellion? Where is the threat? What still draws people into punk in 2004? Is it just the image of rebellion? The sound of loud guitars and feigned rage? I'm not discounting the efforts of those for whom this means something more, though it seems like this seems to be the exception rather than the rule more and more these days. Nor am I discounting the volume of top-notch punk music that is being churned out right now—but the idealist side of me needs a little bit more.

Endnotes:

1) I want to extend a warm welcome to our new coordinator, Golnar Nikpour—She's only been here a week but is fitting in fine—write her letters and say hello.

2) What the fuck is up with the reemergence in hardcore/punk gangs? FSU comes to Posi-numbers and wrecks the place? What the fuck is that all about—for a fucking video shoot!? Huh!? Fuck that.

3) You can, of course, still contact me via mikethorn@maximumrocknroll.com

I WAS BORN IN DOWNTOWN MANHATTAN - IVE GOT ONE SISTER & MY PARENTS ARE DIVORCED - 1986 THATS WHEN I WAS BORN - I LIVED WITH MY MOM FOR 14 YEARS THEN MY SISTER WAS A HEROIN ADDICT SO MY PARENTS DECIDED TO SEND HER OFF TO BOARDING SCHOOL & THEY PICKED ONE THAT WAS ASSOCIATED WITH ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS - SHE WAS THERE FOR A YEAR & HALF SHE WAS 17 - AT THE SAME TIME I WAS ABOUT 14 & I STARTED DRINKING A LOT & NOT GOING TO SCHOOL & HANGING OUT A LOT WITH MY FRIEND KETCHUP LISTENING TO PUNK ROCK MUSIC - MY MOM KEPT KICKING ME OUT OF THE HOUSE BECAUSE OF THESE THINGS - EVENTUALLY SHE DECIDED TO SEND ME OFF TO THE SAME PLACE AS MY SISTER - SO SHE HIRED THESE 2 REALLY BIG RETIRED POLICE MEN TO HANDCUFF ME & TAKE ME TO THE SCHOOL WHICH IS CALLED "THE FAMILY FOUNDATION SCHOOL" - IT TURNED OUT THE SCHOOL WAS REALLY FASCIST - FOR INSTANCE YOU WERENT ALLOWED TO WRITE OR DRAW OR READ OR LISTEN TO MUSIC - YOU COULD READ THE TEXT BOOKS & STUFF THEY GAVE YOU TO READ - YOU HAD TO GO TO CHAPEL TWICE A DAY & REPEAT THE SAME PRAYERS BEFORE EVERY CLASS & AFTER EVERY CLASS - I WASNT ALLOWED TO TALK ABOUT WHATEVER THEY CONSIDERED NEGATIVE - AS IN NEGATIVE TO SOBRIETY NOT NEGATIVE AS IN PESSIMISTIC - THEY THOUGHT EVERYTHING TO DO WITH PUNK ROCK & PRETTY MUCH EVERYTHING I WANTED TO TALK ABOUT WAS NEGATIVE - & THEY HAD ALL THESE "CONSEQUENCES" → ☆

☆ - FOR IF YOU BROKE THE RULES - LIKE HAVING TO STAND IN THE CORNER FOR MONTHS AT A TIME - YOU COULD SLEEP & SIT PERIODICALLY BUT EVERY DAY YOU WOULD STAND - & IF YOU REFUSED TO DO SOMETHING SOMETIMES THEY WOULDNT FEED YOU UNTIL YOU DID IT - & EVERYONE HAD TO BE FOLLOWED AROUND AT ALL TIMES BY OTHER STUDENTS EVEN IN THE BATHROOM - SO I GOT IN A LOT OF TROUBLE - I WAS ON A THING CALLED "WORK SANCTION" FOR ABOUT 3 MONTHS WHICH IS BASICALLY FORCED LABOR ALL DAY - I HAD TO CARRY BUCKETS OF ROCKS & SHOVEL SNOW & STUFF LIKE THAT - SO SINCE I PUT UP SUCH A STRUGGLE WITH THE RULES MY PARENTS FINALY DECIDED THAT MAYBE THE SCHOOL WASNT RIGHT FOR ME - SO I WENT TO A WILDERNESS PROGRAM THEN ANOTHER BOARDING SCHOOL IN ARIZONA - & NOW I'M 17 - I JUST RAN AWAY/GOT KICKED OUT OF MY HOUSE - IVE BEEN STAYING WITH DIFFERENT FRIENDS & I HOPE TO STAY AT THE KFC SQUAT

X

Nick - 05/2K4 - Lower East Side NYC

I was first introduced to Nick by Ketchup (*Crack the Sidewalk* zine)—she brought him over to my house while I was doing some cement work & he was nice enough to go out & haul me a big 50 pound bag of sand from the hardware store - he is also a really great artist & draws graffti style comics—him & Ketchup just finished a very cool comic book called *Monstrocity* that you can get for $2 ppd USA—send to Monstrocity c/o Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn, NYC, NY10276 USA

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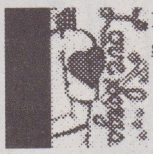

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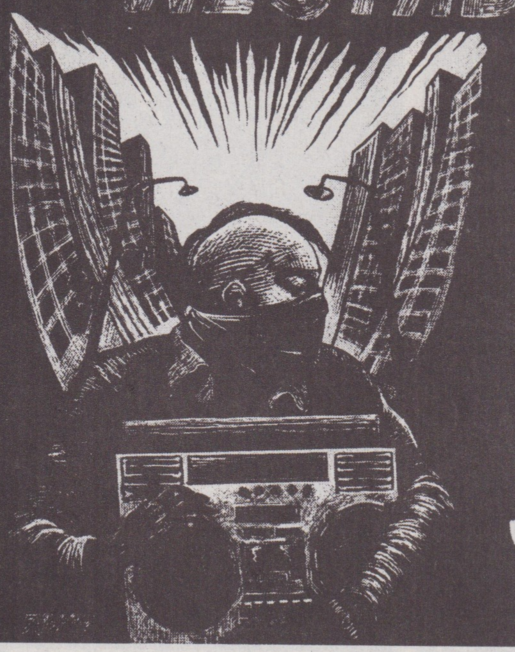

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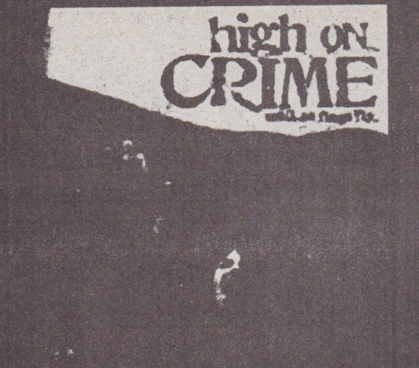

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DRUGGING THE KIDS

By Christopher Getzan/ NEW STANDARD NEWS

A new plan by the Bush administration to test the nation's public school population for mental disorders and treat them with controversial drugs has raised an alarm among some medical science watchdogs and members of the mental health community.

The White House is expected to announce a mental health and disability initiative that recommends the screening and treatment of the country's K-12 students. The plan is based on a Texas program a government whistleblower has called "a Trojan horse" for pharmaceutical companies.

As first reported by the British Medical Journal, the plan is derived from findings by the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health, a committee of doctors and mental health care professionals established in 2002. Published by the New Freedom Initiative (NFI), the report recommends states start testing for and treating mental disorders as early as possible, focusing on students, who can be easily accessed in the public school system.

The mental health component of the plan is based on the Texas Medication Algorithm Project (TMAP), which was engineered during Bush's tenure as governor.

The New Freedom Initiative recommended a screening program for "consumers of all ages," including pre-school children. The commission found that schools are in a "key position" to influence the phenomena of young children being "expelled from preschools and childcare facilities for severely disruptive behaviors and emotional disorders." To do so, the NFI said that "state-of-the-art treatments" were in order, and praised TMAP for showing "results in better consumer outcomes."

The NFI plan "doesn't have the Orwellian goal of drugging the populace for a political purpose; it's the Orwellian goal of drugging the populace for an economic purpose," says Allen Jones, whistleblower. The American Psychiatric Association, which receives funding from drug companies, has hailed the commission's conclusions as a sound preventative approach to dealing with mental illness.

Critics of the plan, however, point to strong connections between the New Freedom Commission on Mental Health and the pharmaceutical industry, and they contend that the plan will be a financial boon to drug companies while compromising the health of the nation's children.

Holistic mental health advocate David Oaks, director of MindFreedom, a coalition of groups that campaigns for people diagnosed with psychiatric disabilities, says the issues of child mental health are not only more complicated than just testing for disorders and putting kids on drugs, but also colored by powerful societal pressures and millions of dollars in drug revenues. Oaks says the president's plan amounts to little more than "No child left undrugged."

"It's very unimaginative. The idea sounds good: get help for the kids," Oaks said. "But the mental health machine tends to label, label, label." The labeling, said Oaks, all too often stigmatizes children as "abnormal."

Patricia Weathers said her son was dismissed from the public educational system because of her refusal to continue to drug him at the school system's request after school officials diagnosed him as having ADHD.

"Instead of saying a child is having trouble reading, and giving him an educational resource, they say, Ooh well, he's ADD," she said. In the case of her son, Weathers said he had physical conditions, among them anemia, that may have been hindering his educational progress.

Criticism of the NAI plan, or at least the blueprint for it, has not been limited to the grassroots. In 2002 Allen Jones, a former investigator for the Office of the Inspector General in Pennsylvania, had been looking into the propriety of an off-the-books account that originated within the Pennsylvania Department of Mental Health. According to Jones, when he went to the New York Times and British Medical Journal with accusations that the drug company Janssen may have been attempting to influence the formation of a TMAP-style test and treat plan, he was told to "quit swimming upstream." When he refused to quiet down, he was fired, he added.

In a whistleblower report posted on the Law Project for Psychiatric Rights website, Jones elaborated on his charges, and explained that during its pilot stage, TMAP was packed with doctors who had strong ties to the drug industry. Jones said that ties to the drug companies gave them a financial incentive to recommend expensive, brand name drugs, rather than cheaper comparable medicines.

Jones also writes that a number of the New Freedom Initiative for Mental Health Commission members were linked to TMAP's founding or are advocates for the program's expansion in states like Maryland and Ohio.

Nationally, pharmaceutical companies have been generous in doling out campaign contributions to the former Texas governor and his party. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, the pharmaceutical industry has given President George W. Bush $764,274 so far this election cycle, making the president the number one recipient of campaign donations of either party from the pharmaceutical industry.

Number two and three respectively are New Jersey Congressman Mike Ferguson and North Carolina Senator John Burr, each of whom are situated on the Committee on Energy and Commerce Subcommittees on Health, which oversees mental health and research, biomedical programs, Medicaid, and food and drug policies. Presumptive Democratic Presidential candidate John Kerry has also received campaign contributions from the industry, with just over $149,000 in donations.

This mix of money and politics is hardly helpful for members of the mental health issues community and their advocates, said Oaks. Instead, he said, "Imagine the whole environmental movement funded by the oil industry."

PIQUETERO ACTIONS ROCK BUENOS AIRES

Faultines

In recent months, the unemployed workers' movements in Buenos Aires, Argentina, known as Piqueteros, have carried out a series of mass direct actions. Throughout, the Piqueteros have concentrated their efforts on meeting immediate social needs. Their actions have included occupying at least nine McDonald's outlets to demand milk and books for schools, targeting government revenue by occupying the ticket windows in public railway stations, and laying siege to the French supermarket chain Carrefour demanding 200 jobs (the company resisted, citing fears they would quickly be unionized).

In June, Piqueteros confronted the privatized oil company Repsol-YPF, demanding needs-based pricing for cooking gas, and free distribution to the kitchens of the unemployed movement. State workers, teachers and health-care workers staged a three-day strike and joined the unemployed in marches, road blockages and bridge seizures to demand higher wages, unemployment compensation, rehiring of downsized workers, and a six-hour workday. Mobilization for a new economy continues at press time.

BHOPAL: 20 YEARS AND

Compiled by Anandi

"Let me tell you about the night of December 2nd/3rd 1984. It happened just after midnight, the unthinkable thing that had been coming, that journalists and plant workers alike had predicted. A rumbling in the pipes, the realization that something had gone terribly wrong. Panic, then, and the discovery that all the safety systems were down. Water had got into the giant tank containing the methyl-isocyanate (MIC). A violent heat-producing reaction began and as more water poured into the tank the fiercer grew the reaction. At high temperatures MIC breaks down into other highly toxic chemicals, including cyanides. The tank was buried in the ground, sealed under concrete, yet so intolerable was its chemical indigestion that it burst out of the earth and stood shuddering on end, emitting a stream of gas into the night. Another stream poured from the half-dismantled "scrubber", and was caught by the wind and flung towards the crowded neighborhoods nearby.

"In J.P.Nagar, Oriya Basti, Kainchi Chola, Kazi Camp, most people were at home sleeping. The gases came into their houses without warning. They woke choking, with their eyes and mouths burning. Nobody knew what had happened. Then came shouts of 'gas!' and 'run away!' and doors began opening, people tumbling out of their houses. The gas was waiting for them, rolling in thick clouds along the narrow lanes, which in some places were no more than four feet wide. The streetlamps were shedding a tobacco-brown light. No insects whirled about them, they were all already dead. As families picked up their toddlers and babies and fled, the alleys became narrow stampedes of people and animals—cows and dogs ran along with their owners—people fell and were trampled, children were wrenched out of their mothers' arms and lost, never found again. 8,000 people died very horribly, with piss and shit running down their legs, their eyeballs white slits where the gases had bleached them. The gases stripped the linings from their lungs, and they drowned in their own fluids. Others had sudden convulsions and dropped in the street. The city was full of dead bodies. Nobody knows exactly how many died, but we can form an idea because 7,000 burial shrouds were bought over the next three days. This does not take into consideration the hundreds of people who were unaccounted for, or the families who had no one left to bury or cremate them. In the railway station, a whole tribe of gypsies camped on one of the further platforms perished to the last soul. Not one of their names is known."—A survivor of the Dec 2, 1984 chemical accident at a Union Carbide pesticide factory in Bhopal, India, recognized as being the worst industrial accident in human history.

The crisis that hit Bhopal that night had begun developing in the afternoon. During a routine maintenance operation an error by maintenance workers led to a sudden and catastrophic inflow of water into the storage tank that held the MIC, an unstable and extremely dangerous compound.

But the very storage of such large quantities of MIC is questionable. "MIC is an 'intermediate chemical', and everyone knows that its storage is quite a risky proposition. So no one really manufactures large quantities of this stuff and stores it for a long time," says Shakeel Quereshi, who was in charge of the shift that night and is the one accused in the on-going criminal case in Indian courts. Says Quereshi, "The company was almost over-confident in the handling of this explosive stuff and never really bothered about these difficulties."

In fact, the company was having problems marketing the pesticide and had tried to cut costs by reducing safety measures. During the routine maintenance that sparked the disaster, vital safety systems at the pesticide plant were either malfunctioning or turned off.

Despite taking more than three hours to inform police of the nature of the problem the factory management had enough time to shift all its workers to safety. "One reason why nobody from the factory died was because they were all told to run in the opposite direction away from the city, and also to keep their eyes wet with cloth dipped in water," says Quereshi. But the company did nothing to warn the residents of the impending disaster. As deadly substances including Methyl isocyanate, hydrogen cyanide and other toxic gases escaped from a tank, the people of Bhopal were not given the most basic advice—to not panic and stay indoors, and that keeping their eyes moist would offer them some protection.

To add insult to injury, the corporation quickly determined to save its skin by playing down the magnitude and impact of the disaster. Days after the disaster Union Carbide's director of health, safety and environmental affairs, Jackson B. Browning, was still describing the gas as "nothing more than a potent tear gas".

The company continued with the same approach even after it became known that thousands had died in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, and many more had been rendered sick for a life time. (Current estimates run to around 20,000 deaths over the last 20 years.)

"Even today, no one knows the right kind of treatment that has to be offered to someone who inhales MIC gas," says Dr Satpathy who works at the Hamida hospital,

20,000 DEATHS LATER.

the only state hospital operating on the night of the disaster. "As the company that has been handling this dangerous stuff for decades, it is the responsibility of Union Carbide to advise the people in general and the medical community in particular about the line of treatment for someone who is exposed to MIC. But we do not have any official information from the company on this subject."

Union Carbide, which is now owned by Dow Chemical Co., accepted moral responsibility for the disaster, but now blames it on sabotage by a disgruntled employee, despite ample documentation that there were numerous warnings of the possibility of an accident along these exact lines.

The Union Carbide Company had paid $470 million US as compensation for the victims. But most of the money remained in a government-run bank as the settlement was deferred because of technical disputes on categorizing the victims.

On July 19, the Supreme Court ordered the government to release the remaining $325.5 million it owed the victims. It told Bhopal's welfare commission to supervise the money's distribution and report back to the court in two months.

"This is a significant step forward," says Gopal, although he adds that every victim of the gas leak will finally get a little more than US $500 on an average. He points out that this amount "won't even cover their medical expenses."

"The significance of the order is also that the highest court of law gave its stamp of approval to the figures of dead and injured determined by the claim courts. We want the compensation to be increased by five times, else this would be adhura nyan (incomplete justice)," said N.D. Jayaprakash, Co-convenor, Bhopal gas Peedith Sangharsh Sahayog Samiti.

Jaisingh said there were only 105,000 victims to be compensated as per the terms of the $470 million settlement held earlier. However, she said the Court order recognizes that there were over 570,000 claimants who have to be paid compensation out of the settlement fund now.

"Since the court has accepted that the scale of the tragedy was five times more than what 1989 estimates held, therefore, the amount of compensation should also be increased by five times," said Abdul Jabbar Khan, Convenor, Bhopal Gas Peedith Mahila Udyog Sanghathan. These organizations are now planning to file a petition before the Court for an increase in the compensation amount.

Dow Chemical, however, has said it was not involved in the tragedy and that it considers the original settlement—approved by the Indian government—to be final.

Indian activists have also renewed their call for action against Warren Anderson.

Initially, the tragedy provoked a strong upsurge of popular anger. The people wanted Warren Anderson, the chairman of Union Carbide to be imprisoned for this crime. Anderson did come to Bhopal for a brief period, but was treated as an important visiting dignitary rather than as the head of an operation guilty of a major crime against humanity. He was actually given an airlift from the company's air-conditioned research and development center overlooking the magnificent Bhopal Lake.

The hard reality is that, in spite of the existence of an extradition treaty with the United States, the Indian law enforcement agencies have not been able to find Anderson, who is now a proclaimed absconder and wanted by Interpol.According to recent reports, the US embassy in India has rejected India's request for the extradition of Anderson. An embassy official said the decision was taken by the US Justice Department in June.

"The issue of corporate liability is still to be seriously addressed in India," points out Gopal Krishna, a New Delhi-based senior program officer with the environment group, Toxic Links. "While we welcome the release of the compensation, we cannot forget the issue of liability," he remarks.

The activists stress that the Indian government had tried to "dilute" the case against Anderson, by seeking to change the charges being heard against him in a Bhopal court—from culpable homicide to negligence.

But they add they are encouraged by two recent rulings—the Indian Supreme Court's Monday order and an earlier US district court judgment on cleaning up the contaminated area in Bhopal.

The gas victims had filed a plea with the Supreme Court in March 2002, asking for the release of the compensation.

Also since the compensation ruling of funds, over 1,000 victims demonstrated before Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Uma Bharati's residence demanding clean drinking water. Over 40,000 victims residing in 14 localities close to the abandoned Union Carbide factory have been drinking contaminated water for nearly 20 years.

The plant has been lying closed since the accident. Thousands of tons of toxic chemicals have been lying on plant premises unattended polluting the groundwater, the activists said.

The water contamination has been proved through tests conducted by government organizations and independent organizations as well, they said.

U.S. POLICIES BLASTED AT AIDS CONFERENCE

Democracy Now

As the International AIDS Conference in Bangkok comes to a close the US is facing sharp criticism for its funding policies, the small size of its delegation at the conference, and a lack of action to make generic AIDS medications available.

Randall Tobias, head of President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief and former head of pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly, was disrupted by about 40 protesters during his speech yesterday.

Many conference participants criticized Bush's 15 billion dollar plan because it prioritizes abstinence-based AIDS prevention and only a small percentage of the money will go to the multilateral Global Fund to Fight AIDS.

The global conference has included extensive discussion of the so-called ABC prevention technique, which stands for "Abstain, Be Faithful, or Use a Condom," a method advocated by the Ugandan government and supported by the US. Critics say condoms should not be a last resort because women around the world often do not have the option of abstinence.

Two reports from UNAids released at the conference reveal that AIDS prevention programs had yet to have a significant impact on the spread of the virus. Only 7% of those with HIV who need drugs to stay alive over the next two years are getting them.

Generic AIDS drugs will be vital in closing the gap between infection and treatment. Doctors Without Borders presented data from projects in 21 developing countries at the conference showing that controversial fixed-dose generic drug combinations to treat AIDS works just as well as patented medications. The treatment combines three antiretroviral drugs into one pill that patients must take twice a day. Fewer pills to take increases compliance and generic drug production pushed the cost of these medications to $389 or less, a fraction of the cost of patented drugs.

The Bush administration says it will assist in providing generic drugs after the Food and Drug Administration approves those medications. This despite the fact that the same drugs have already passed muster with the World Health Organization.

And while this conference will likely serve as a benchmark for AIDS research and treatment, it's impact may be limited by the absence of many US scientists who planned to attend but were blocked by the Administration for Health and Human Services. The US sent about 230 scientists to the AIDS conference in Barcelona two years ago and this year sent only 50 AIDS researchers. Observers speculated that the move could be retribution from Secretary Tommy Thompson who was heckled by activists during his speech in Barcelona.

GREECE WINS THE GOLD IN REPRESSION

By Antonis Vardis/Faultlines

With just a few weeks to go before the Olympic Games in Athens, preparations for the world's biggest athletic competition are well under way. So far, international media have focused on the delayed construction of the Olympic venues, mostly ignoring the Greek government's ecological destruction and trampling of human rights.

The first victims of the Olympics were eighteen workers killed during the construction blitzkrieg of Olympic venues, but they will certainly not be the last. In the frenzied rush leading up to the Games, the Olympics have proven to be the perfect excuse for the Greek State to attack all the social groups that are in the margins and just about everyone refusing to participate in the corporate spectacle that is the Olympics.

The Cretan newspaper *Patris* revealed in April that local authorities of Heraclion (one of the four cities hosting the Games) were planning to relocate all of the city's Roma (Gypsy) population to a military camp so that they wouldn't ruin the city's image. Thankfully, this plan caused fierce reaction and is now unlikely to materialize. However, stray animals (mainly dogs, cats and pigeons) in all four Olympic cities will not be as lucky—actions for their extermination by poisoning are already in progress.

A new 'Olympic' prison is being built at Aspropirgos, near Athens. This is perhaps the strongest evidence for the repressive wave that is expected to hit Greece in August. Local police will likely get help from the massive influx of international law enforcement converging in Greece in detaining junkies, Roma, refugee populations, and political activists under the guise of "combating terrorism."

During and after the Olympics, Athens will have something Orwellian about it; over 1,000 surveillance cameras have been installed within Olympic venues and another 283 in other public spaces. This is an extraordinary measure for a country where such cameras have only been introduced within the last few years. The cameras were supposedly installed temporarily and for traffic coordination purposes only. This, however, would not explain why most of them are installed in areas where demonstrations are expected to take place.

The Greek Minister of Public Order, Y. Voulgarakis, recently confirmed fears that the cameras will stay after the Games. He stated that he would never order the removal of the cameras, adding that "any minister who did so would have to face the consequences, as this (surveillance) network has cost a vast amount of money to the country and therefore has to be used in the post-Olympics era".

Further adding to the whole surveillance paranoia, Voulgarakis announced that during the Games, citizens will be able to dial a four-digit number (1014) free of charge, in order to inform the authorities if they are aware of any "suspicious" activities.

It is estimated that the security personnel present in Athens during the Games will be 40,000—80,000 strong. The Greek police and army, domestic and international intelligence services and even NATO forces will be there. The first Olympic Games of the post-9/11 era will be the Games of surveillance, commercialism and state repression.

Finally, the environmental destruction caused by the construction of venues for the Games is massive. The Olympic Village is being constructed on the slope of the mountain of Parnitha, eliminating part of forest in one of Athens' last green resorts and the canoeing venue is being built in an area of global cultural and historical heritage in Marathon. The list is endless: the destruction of green to allow for the construction of the ping pong venue in Galatsi, cutting down of 8,500 trees to allow for the expansion of roads, and construction of an ultra-high voltage center (400/150 ÈK.Vat, 1120 M.V.A.) at the mount of Immitos, 125 meters away from a local school.

Naturally, such repressive plans and actions have been fiercely opposed by leftist and anarchist groups and individuals across the country. Among others, the campaign "Anti2004" has organized conferences such as the anti-Olympics festival held in early July so journalists, lawyers, students, athletes and anarchists could discuss what the Games really stand for: steroids, bosses, multinationals, environmental destruction, and state repression. Opposition to the Games is strong and growing. One slogan that has been overheard increasingly is "Let the Olympics die in their birthplace."

GUATEMALAN WOMEN MURDERED AT ALARMING RATE

By Susan Ferriss
Cox News Service

Guatemala City—They were impoverished and middle-class women, students, mothers, shop and factory workers. And since 2001, more than 1,180 of them have been killed in unspeakable ways. Now the victims' relatives share the torment of navigating through a justice system that even those who work in it admit is failing.

Less than a decade after a 1996 peace accord officially ended three decades of bloody civil war here, the small Central American country of Guatemala is struggling with a violent crime wave that includes a surge in the killings of women and girls. In 2001, an estimated 303 women were murdered. The number rose to 317 in 2002 and to 383 in 2003.

Through April of this year, about 180 women have been killed, about the same number that were slain during all of 2000, according to Sergio Fernando Morales, the top human rights official in Guatemala.

"The level of impunity is so great that there is no hesitation on the part of criminals," Morales said.

By many counts, fewer than three percent of murders are ever solved in Guatemala, a country of 14 million people. The increase in the killings of women here recalls the hundreds of slayings of women in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, over the last decade. As in crime-ridden Ciudad Juarez, victims' families in Guatemala complain that investigators are overwhelmed, intimidated or simply don't care about bringing killers to justice.

"Some prosecutors don't have the will to investigate," said Sandra Zayas, a special prosecutor whose job is to investigate sex crimes and crimes against children in Guatemala City. Zayas took on 30 cases of murders of women last year, mostly involving rape and mutilation or multiple, gang-land-style slayings. This year, she agreed to add 50 more to her list, some of them cases where regular prosecutors were making no progress.

Out of the 30 cases last year, Zayas successfully ordered arrests in four cases that are about to go to trial. On top of murder cases, her six assistants and six investigators are also responsible for 120 cases related to the trafficking of children. The investigators have one vehicle to do their work.

"I have told my people, I fear that these (female murder) cases are getting out of control now. I'm not sure we realize the magnitude of what we're dealing with," Zayas said.

The women who have been killed here are often strangled, burned, mutilated by knives or machetes or shot. Zayas is also prosecuting several gang youths accused of raping two sisters, 14 and 11, and cutting them into pieces because the elder girl spurned one of the gang members.

Rampant domestic abuse—20,000 reported cases last year—also contributes to the violent death toll among women.

"Lately we have seen two or three killings a day," said Giovanna Lemus of the Guatemalan No Violence Against Women Network. The network has tried to attract international attention to the killings by requesting probes by the United Nations and the Organization Of American States' Inter-American Commission for Human Rights.

Guatemala is a nation of extreme inequality—57% of the population is poor—with a harsh legacy of violence and impunity. During an armed conflict between the early 1960s and 1996, more than 200,000 people died. Thousands are still missing and thousands were massacred during the 1980s, when the US-backed army unleashed a brutal counter-insurgency campaign to root out support for leftist guerrillas.

"Sometimes we compare these murders to the armed conflict. What has changed? Nothing. We just have it in the city now rather than out in the countryside," said Ileana Peralta, 21, whose sister Nancy was killed in Feb 2002 when she was a 30-year-old student at Guatemala City's San Carlos University. Guatemala's prosecutors don't have life insurance at the moment because the state stopped paying into a fund, so many won't take on the risks of serious investigations, Zayas said.

For the victims' families, the system can be cruel. Ileana Peralta and her sister Maria Elena have relentlessly pressured investigators to check into suspicious activity at the university, where a student—never interviewed by police, they say—told them he saw three men pushing a woman into a car the day Nancy disappeared.

"Every time I walk into the investigator's office, the people there laugh or make comments," said Maria Elena, 31, tears sliding down her face as she showed news clippings about her sister's killing.

She demanded to see her sister's case file in April and an investigator refused, telling her to "shut up" and stop talking to the press. A nurse who is now taking law classes, Maria Elena said she wouldn't rest. "The people who did this to my sister should not walk free," she said.

Rosa Elvira Franco, mother of murdered 15-year-old Maria Isabel Veliz, also keeps a thick file of possible leads in her daughter's brutal rape, beating and mutilation in Dec 2001. Maria Isabel disappeared from a clothing shop where she worked during her Christmas vacation.

Franco identified a suspicious man at a karate school who had tried to befriend her daughter. She called her daughter's missing cell phone and talked with someone who said she had bought the phone. She knocked on the door of an address that she believes her daughter had written down on a piece of paper at the store.

The police didn't follow up, she said. "They have DNA samples. They have hair. Why don't they do something?" she said.

PROTESTERS ATTACK CITY HALL

The Australian

Dozens of demonstrators threw sticks, stones and noise bombs at Buenos Aires City Hall today in a protest against a tough social code reform that would outlaw peddlers, prostitutes, transvestites and street protests.

Police and security guards trained water cannons on the mostly poor and unemployed protestors, who knocked down part of a fence, battered the City Hall's inner doors, uprooted fence posts, hurled stones against picture windows and set bonfires on the surrounding grounds.

The proposed reform, predominantly targeting the Argentinian capital's red light district, would impose stiff fines on those who, according to the protestors, could least afford them.

POLITICAL HIP-HOP UNDER FIRE IN BURMA

Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA)

Burma's Military Intelligence (MI) has renewed a nation-wide crackdown on politically sensitive music. According to Mizzima News agency sources, the latest target is a newly released CD containing songs by an exiled Burmese contemporary hip-hop band, Myanmar Future Generation (MFG).

In June '04, the MI arrested members and concert organizers of a new hip hop band named 9MM after they performed their first concert at the Strand Hotel in Rangoon. In addition to their own songs, 9MM's performance featured MFG songs, according to the Mizzima News sources. The sources said the detainees were taken to an unknown MI location in the capital for interrogation. They were released on July 9.

Meanwhile, the MI in Taunggyi, the capital of Shan State, began conducting an investigation into students who may possess MFG's CDs. According to a Mizzima News report, the move followed a tip from MI agents in Rangoon that a student group named New Generation was secretly distributing the CDs.

The report quoted a student from Taunggyi as saying that the student group downloaded the songs, which contained lyrics about freedom and democracy, from MFG's website.

The MFG, founded in 2003, consists of 15 members living in exile. Their whereabouts and identities are kept secret for security reasons

COUP D'ETAT: DRAWING THE LINKS

The following is an update from the Venezuela Information Office.

More and more evidence is emerging that indicates the United States Government has had more influence than previously known on the current political divisions in Venezuela. Analyses of funding and public statements from officials even point to US involvement with Venezuela's 2-day coup two years ago. These revelations are eerily reminiscent of US involvement in the coup in Chile 30 years ago, which ushered in 17 years of brutal dictatorship under Augusto Pinochet.

For years, democracy in Venezuela was much like that in the US: representative democracy with political power alternating between two parties. The country's economy is dominated by oil, a situation leading to a massive wealth disparity. While some Venezuelans enjoyed privileges associated with rich countries, the majority of Venezuelans remained mired in poverty. Lack of access to health care, education and decent jobs plagued the majority while the nation's oil wealth was squandered by an elite few. In 1998, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez was elected with 56% of the popular vote, upsetting the two political parties who had dominated Venezuelan politics for decades.

Chavez immediately set to work fulfilling his campaign promise to make the government responsive to the needs of its poor majority. Thousands of new public schools and health clinics were built, and the newly educated rural poor were encouraged to participate in the democratic process. In the years since, the ousted parties, largely representing the country's elite class, have joined forces to stop the Chavez reforms at any cost.

Wealthy and well-connected internationally, the opposition parties have called in favors from their allies at home and in the US government, maintaining a near monopoly in the media, securing financing, and gaining political backing for their efforts. So far opposition efforts have included a short-lived coup d'etat and an economic shutdown that cost the economy billions.

Thirty years earlier in Chile, another democratically elected leader championed the needs of the poor majority. After less than three years in office, President Salvador Allende was assassinated and a brutal military dictatorship took power. The 17-year reign of General Augusto Pinochet is one of the darkest chapters of modern Latin American history.

A 1975 Congressional investigation led by Senator Frank Church looked into the Nixon Administration's involvement in Chile throughout the period. The Church Report documents the participation of American officials, journalists and covert operatives who laid the stage for and directly assisted the violent overthrow of the Chilean government. While the full details of US involvement in Venezuela will not be known for many years, the information available presents chilling parallels to the demise of Chilean democracy.

The Church report states that, "the most extensive covert action activity in Chile was propaganda." Journalists for Chilean and American newspapers were fed false information about the Allende administration, alleging dictatorial and Communist activities. US State Department officials made unsubstantiated but ominous references to Allende as a force of repression, human rights abuses and violence. The press blamed any act of opposition violence on Allende and his supporters.

In modern Venezuela, the media are again a principal source of anti-government organizing. Opposition leaders own the overwhelming majority of radio, print, and television media outlets. During the coup in 2002, top media executives met with the dictatorship's president to offer their support. When the democratically elected President was restored to office after two days, the networks ignored the turn of events and instead ran cartoons and old movies.

American journalists rely heavily on vague descriptions of Chavez from opposition parties or State Department officials as "quasi-authoritarian," even when no evidence is presented to warrant such a description. "Unnamed" State Department officials are used as official sources for serious allegations like complicity in terrorism, political prisoners, and media repression, for which no documentation is provided.

Media outlets often recycle these questionable "facts" until they become accepted as truth. For example, one Venezuelan newspaper reported a bizarre rumor that the Chavez administration funded Colombian guerilla movements. The newspaper account was then cited in a Defense Department Intelligence Assessment, which in turn made the rumor fair game to be repeated as fact in various Venezuelan outlets and, eventually, the US press. US editorial boards then base opinions on this dubious information. Editorials in the Washington Post have repeatedly passed on dozens of such factual errors, which greatly influence public perceptions.

The Church Report noted that US actions in Chile "went beyond the mere collection of

MOUNTING EVIDENCE SUGGESTS ISRAELI OPERATIVES WORKING IN OCCUPIED IRAQ

by Jon Elmer (FromOccupiedPalestine.org)

Further evidence of the presence of Israeli operatives in Iraq arose this weekend when the general formerly in charge of the US-run Iraqi prison system, herself considered partly responsible for torture at Abu Ghraib and other prisons under her command, told the BBC that she met an Israeli interrogator working in a US-run "intelligence center" in Baghdad. Brigadier General Janet Karpinski told BBC Radio in an interview on Saturday that she met with a man who claimed to be Israeli and that he "did some of the interrogation" at the facility.

Karpinski is the highest-ranking official to confirm an Israeli presence in Iraq. As the head of the 800th Military Police Brigade, Karpinski was responsible for all of Iraq's 17 US-run prison facilities. She was suspended in May for her role in the systemic torture carried out by personnel under her command in Abu Ghraib and elsewhere in Iraq.

Disclosures suggesting Israeli involvement in the ongoing occupation of Iraq are damaging to the US' already meager credibility in the Middle East. Anger toward Israel's occupation of Palestinian lands, which the US has backed since 1967, as well as its own human rights abuses and reputation for torturing Arab prisoners, render suspicion of Israeli involvement in Iraq an explosive issue throughout much of the Arab and Muslim worlds.

Kamal Muhammad, the manager of al-Aswar furniture shop in Baghdad gave a predictable reaction to the Jerusalem Post. "The Americans and the Israelis are one," he said. "They are the same enemy. Israel is just the baby of the US with the same policies."

In an interview last week with *The Signal*, a California newspaper, Karpinski said she was "shocked" by the Israeli interrogator's presence, and that the development struck her as "unusual."

But a mounting body of evidence indicates that the presence of Israeli operatives working in Iraq is not at all unusual.

New Yorker journalist Seymour Hersh told the BBC that his sources—which include high ranking Lebanese and Turkish officials—confirm the presence of Israeli agents in Iraq. Hersh said it is his understanding that one of the Israeli aims was to gain access to detained members of the secret Iraqi intelligence unit who specialized in Israeli affairs, the BBC reports on its website.

In an article last month, Hersh quoted a senior CIA official and Israeli intelligence officer describing how agents of Israeli's Mossad intelligence service were active in Iraq, while Israeli commandos were training militants in the Kurdish areas of Syria, Turkey, Iran and Iraq. Hersh found this information to be "widely known" in the US intelligence community.

A top US military official quoted in the Washington Post on Sunday denied claims of Israeli presence in Iraq, calling the story an "urban legend."

BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND CHILE.

information" and included direct assistance to "Chileans who sought a military alternative to the Allende presidency."

In Venezuela, White House officials frequently met with coup leaders in the months leading up to the overthrow, and almost certainly knew of the plans in advance. During the coup, White House spokesman Ari Fleisher told the American public that, "the action encouraged by the Chavez government provoked this crisis," assigning blame for protest deaths to the government without substantiation.

CIA Director Richard Helms had clear orders in Chile. Notes from a 1970 meeting with President Nixon read simply "Make the economy scream." In an effort to cripple the Allende government, the US began to cut off investment in Chilean industry—no small matter considering that US corporations owned 70% of all foreign investment. The US used its substantial leverage among international lending institutions to cut off credit. The Nixon Administration also made use of intermediaries from the US labor movement to create a "large, middle class movement" against the government by splitting existing union structures and encouraging divisive strikes.

Similarly the Venezuelan economy let out a scream of international proportions in 2003 after coup leaders regrouped to shut down the nation's oil sector. A two-month lockout of workers, organized by oil executives and tacitly supported by the United States, cut the country's GDP and forced thousands out of work. Today the Venezuelan economy is only beginning to recover from the shutdown.

US agencies spent millions of dollars in covert activities in Chile in the three years leading up to the coup. While some of this money was spent overtly, the bulk was filtered through third parties. For example, the Church Report explains that while no CIA money was sent directly to fund an economically devastating truckers strike, "It is clear that anti-government strikers were actively supported by several of the private sector groups which received CIA funds."

In the same way, modern-day quasi-governmental bodies like the National Endowment for Democracy have funneled millions of Congressionally-approved US taxpayer dollars to Chavez opponents. In the lead-up to the 2002 coup, the NED more than tripled its funding to grantees in Venezuela, including many whose leaders would go on to support the coup.

The language of a 2002 report from US Office of Inspector General strikingly parallels the Church report. "It is clear that NED, Department of Defense (DOD), and other U.S. assistance programs provided training, institution building, and other support to individuals and organizations understood to be actively involved in the brief ouster of the Chavez government."

So just what type of democracy were the NED grantees promoting? In the first hours of the Venezuelan coup, the new government suspended the Constitution, dissolved the National Assembly and the Supreme Court, and fired the head of the National Bank, the Human Rights Ombudsman and the Attorney General. Interim President Pedro Carmona was declared the only legitimate government authority in the country—a one-branch dictatorship. Similarly, General Pinochet was also declared interim president on September 11, 1973, a position he held for 17 years.

In contrast, when Chavez was swept back into office by massive popular support in just two days, he pledged that the Venezuelan Constitution would be the guiding force for re-establishing the Rule of Law, a promise he has kept throughout the crises of the ensuing years.

The one major difference between US intervention in Chile and Venezuela is that the democratically elected government in Venezuela is still in office. US citizens can get involved to ensure that the US government does not support undemocratic activities and illegal intervention. Venezuelans have a right to choose their own democratic government, free of interference from the US government.

Editor's note—While following the Venezuela in the news from here in the US the most frequent device used as evidence that the Chavez regime is "quasi-authoritarian" (as mentioned in the above article) is to mention the "general strikes" by the workers which are "sweeping the country." This is a total misuse of the term. The so-called "strikes" taking place in Venezuela are not true general strikes, ie: an expression of the will of the people used as leverage against the employing classes, but rather "work stoppages", which is to say days on which the bosses announce that their factories will be closed without input from the workers, who, as it happens, are overwhelmingly pro-Chavez. Also I strongly recommend the movie, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised" about the Chavez government and the '02 coup.—Anandi

NEW YORK DOLLS BASSIST DIES

New York Dolls bassist Arthur "Killer" Kane died of advanced leukemia in an L.A. area hospital last night. Kane, who had reunited with surviving bandmates David Johansen and Syl Sylvain for last month's acclaimed performance in London, entered the hospital thinking he was suffering from pneumonia. The Dolls, who released two groundbreaking albums in the 70s, were also slated to play in Japan and at next month's Little Steven-sponsored Garage Festival at Randall's Island in N.Y.C. Kane, a devout Mormon, was being followed around by a camera crew from the church for a documentary, A New York Doll, which detailed his recovery from alcohol and drug abuse. Photographer Bob Gruen, a close friend of the band's, said that, because of the band's current comeback, Arthur died "with a smile on his face." Previous Dolls members Johnny Thunders, Billy Murcia and Jerry Nolan had all previously died from drug-related causes.

BUSH ASSERTS PRE-EMPTIVE STRIKES POLICY, KERRY AGREES

Financial Times/UK

President George W. Bush said on Monday his administration would maintain its policy of pre-empting potential security threats despite growing doubts over the adequacy of US intelligence to assess such dangers.

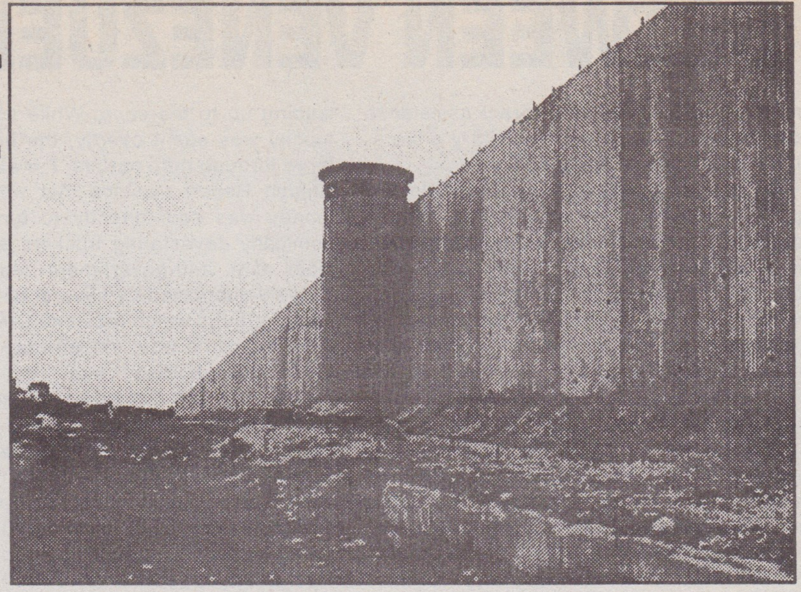
In a speech at the Oak Ridge nuclear facility in Tennessee, Mr Bush made clear he would not rethink the approach after a damning report by the Senate intelligence committee. The report concluded that the CIA made serious errors in asserting that Saddam Hussein's Iraq possessed or was developing weapons of mass destruction.

While acknowledging that the report "has identified some shortcomings in our intelligence capabilities", he said that would not cause him to reconsider the approach that led the US to invade Iraq.

The Senate findings have fueled an already bitter election-year debate over Iraq, even though John Kerry, the Democratic presidential hopeful, and John Edwards, his running mate, both voted for the Senate resolution authorizing war against Iraq.

Mr Kerry said that the Senate findings bolster his argument that Mr Bush misled the country in launching a war that has hurt the US. He refused, however, to reconsider his vote, saying, "it was the correct vote."

ISRAEL'S WALL OF SHAME



By George Bisharat/ San Francisco Chronicle

The recent judgment by the International Court of Justice on Israel's West Bank separation barrier—known to Palestinians as the apartheid wall—may emerge as the most important development in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in years. While advisory in nature, the conclusion that the barrier is illegal may spawn actions by the international community to compel Israeli compliance. In 1971, just such an opinion regarding South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia led to diplomatic pressure, boycotts and other forms of nonviolent resistance against the apartheid regime, eventually contributing to peaceful democratic transformation.

Israel began construction of the barrier in 2002. It consists of a road, trenches, barbed-wire fencing, electronic sensors and a concrete wall as high as 24 feet. Palestinians, together with much of the world, suspect this is a step in an Israeli plan to permanently annex much of the West Bank. (Israel occupied the West Bank in 1967, but the United Nations has designated the territory for Palestinian national self-determination.) Meanwhile, the officially announced purpose of the wall was to prevent infiltration by Palestinian attackers from the West Bank.

While some might have preferred negotiations to enforced segregation, no legal quarrel would have erupted had Israel placed the barrier along its roughly 200-mile West Bank border. But it chose to build the barrier substantially within the West Bank, on Palestinian land.

The planned wall is not linear, with Israelis on one side and Palestinians on the other. Instead, if completed, the barrier will stretch some 400 miles and completely encircle Palestinian population centers in the West Bank. Israel will control all access of people and goods in the Palestinian enclosures. About 43 percent of the West Bank will remain outside the Palestinian areas under Israel's control. In several places, the barrier cuts deep into Palestinian territory to protect Israeli settlements, long condemned as illegal by the international community.

About 120 miles have been built to date, with devastating human impact. According to the Negotiations Affairs Department of the Palestine Liberation Organization, about 8,000 acres of Palestinian land have been seized for the structure. More than 100,000 trees—olive and citrus, among others—have been uprooted. Seventy-five homes and 124 businesses have been destroyed. More than 25,000 acres of Palestinian agricultural land and 50 wells lie on the Israeli side of the wall, to which the Palestinian owners have tightly restricted access.

Israel has established discriminatory regulations that permit Jews freedom of movement in areas near the wall, while requiring special permits of Palestinians. Palestinians have been unable to reach vital educational, health and other social services. Economic activity has been severely disrupted. The Israeli human rights group B'Tselem estimates that the wall will impact 875,000 Palestinians. As some commentators familiar with South Africa have noted, what is emerging in the West Bank is a form of apartheid—only in aggravated form.

The international court heard this case following an urgent request from the U.N. General Assembly in December. Israel, backed primarily by the United States, refused to participate in oral pleadings, objecting to the court's jurisdiction on the ground that the case was political, not legal. The fifteen-member court—with esteemed judges representing the world's major legal systems—rejected Israel's procedural challenge on a vote of 14 to 1. By identical margins, it found that the barrier, as constructed, violated international law, and that Israel must cease building activities immediately, remove existing portions and pay compensation to Palestinians.

The near unanimity on the points of law amounts to a repudiation of the legality of the barrier. Even the lone dissenter, American judge Thomas Buergenthal, did not defend the barrier as lawful. Rather, he believed the evidence insufficient to reach a finding. Significantly, he, too, affirmed that Israel's West Bank, East Jerusalem and Gaza Strip settlements were illegal under the Fourth Geneva Convention, and that any parts of the wall designed to protect settlements would likewise be illegal.

Palestinians have begun a hunger strike to demand implementation of the ruling by the International Court of Justice that the wall is illegal and must be torn down, and they are calling on supporters in the U.S. to stage a Solidarity Fast in the days leading up to the Democratic and Republican Conventions.

Vindication of their grievances by the world's highest legal authority restores hope to Palestinians that nonviolent, legal means of struggle for their rights can bear fruit. That is a truth in which Palestinians—who have appealed to the world's conscience for decades, garnering countless U.N. resolutions that failed to stem the intensifying discrimination, violence and economic strangulation they suffer—have sometimes lost faith. Empowering the peaceful and law-abiding segments of the Palestinian national movement can only benefit the region, as well as the rest of us whose fates are tied closely with it.

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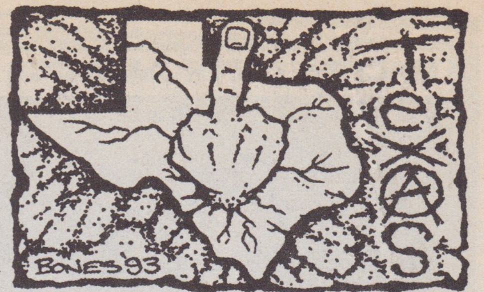


A lot has changed since the last scene report submitted to *Maximumrocknroll* on the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex. In case anybody not from Texas hasn't heard BREAD & WATER has broken up. They played their last show with From Ashes Rise, Garuda and Waking Terror last December. New bands have started and new spaces have opened, and spaces have closed like Spider Babies, which held hardcore matinees pretty frequently. Dallas is currently plagued by metalcore and moshy breakdown metal that really has nothing to do with punk. When I read reviews on Texas bands it has become apparent that the state has gotten a reputation for wandering astray from punk, I hope that as people look into some of the bands that I mention they see that that's not true. Some of these bands are already fairly well known, but for the sake of those who don't know I'm going to briefly describe them anyway.

AKKOLYTE is a long established bass/drum duo featuring two brothers kicking out killer grind with melodic, dare I say, jazzy bass lines and brutal drums. They have released three 7"s (Septic Tumor, Future Fascists of America, and a split with E.O.S.) plus other upcoming compilation and cassette releases internationally (Blinded By Reality 4-way split: AKKOLYTE, Endless Struggle (Singapore grind), Insurrection (Singapore crust), and Davina Rhine (Women's Liberation Spoken Word). Expect a U.S. tour this summer with Houston grind PRETTY LITTLE FLOWER.

FIVE POINTERS are from Irving and play fast youth crew influenced thrash not unlike Find Him and Kill Him, Life's Halt, and Vitamin X. By the time this scene report is read they will have released a 7" on Hey Joker! Records.

GARUDA is a well-known Ft. Worth Grind/Metal band featuring members of BREAD & WATER. They have released a debut full length called "Cold Wire Sentiment", with 6 songs. Very awesome.

DED-KAT are a metal band that draw influences from everything such as funk, hardcore, powerviolence and zany comedy. Very unpredictable live.

MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS are an incredibly awesome fastcore (or power violence if you will) band out of North Texas and Houston that have a 7" on 625 Thrashcore. Fast screamed and growled vocals with melodic guitars and tempos ranging from mid to really fast. Possible tour of the West Coast in summer '04.

PURPLE KNOCK OUT GAS has two members of DED-KAT. They are a duo that scream chaotically over prerecorded computer music with sound clips. Although the concept has been done before (Fast Forward), I don't know if I can compare them to anybody.

WAKING TERROR play fast, angry, crusty style hardcore with ex members of BREAD & WATER, and Stefan from AKKOLYTE on the drums (so you know those high pitched crust vocals will make an appearance). Political and extremely D.I.Y.

UNIT 21 are immensely popular with the North Texas street punk scene. Fast, thrashy punk is how I would describe these locals. Unit 21 put out a self released full length CD in May and are touring the full West Coast with ANS this summer.

ANS are from Irving and play 80s style hardcore in the vein of Black Flag and Stalag 13. Very fast and very fun to watch live. They have a self-released CD titled "Success At Last" and are releasing another CDep in late spring.

LAYIN IT DOWN bring back mid 80s style straight edge hardcore punk similar to Insted, Chain of Strength, Youth of Today and other Revelation bands. They have a demo in circulation in the area.

RICIN, from Dallas, are a fast hardcore band comparable to What Happens Next? (I would say). Very fast, awesome West Coat inspired hardcore.

THE HONOR CODE crank out fun pop punk in the vein of Green Day despite its blatantly youth crew sounding name. Featuring Philberto and Jesse from FIVE POINTERS.

As for places to play, there are a variety in Dallas, Fort Worth and the surrounding cities.

1919 Hemphill St. is a DIY community space in Ft. Worth focusing on activism, independent music, DIY workshops, Critical Mass, and all things totally sweet. It is a great space to see floor shows and it is entirely supported through donations and show proceeds, which are never over$5. http://1919hemphill.org

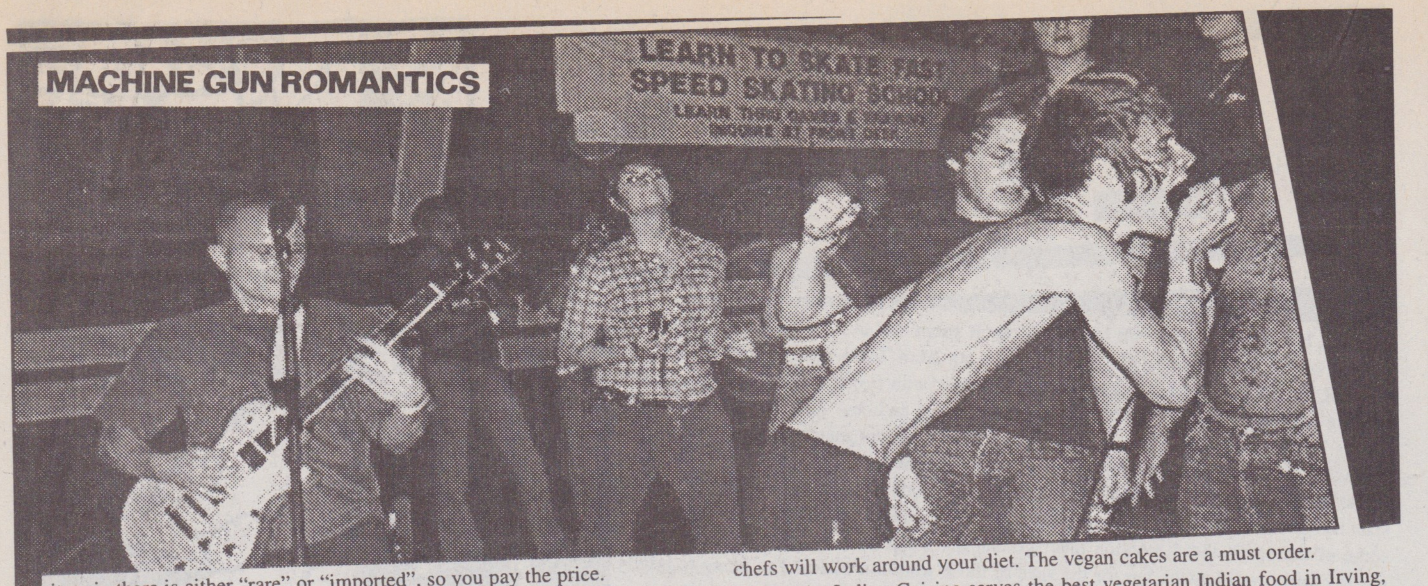
Lots of good house shows go on at Nick's House (from RICIN) in Dallas. Touring and local bands play in his garage. The PA is very good and they never get shut down. If you are interested in booking a show at Nick's visi: www.ninjaoperation.com/house

There are some bars that have punk shows such as The Wreck Room in Fort Worth, which has all ages punk, hardcore and metal shows, as does The Red Blood Club in Dallas (Deep Ellum). Rubber Gloves in Denton is one of my favorite (non DIY) venues and has punk shows every once in a while, and when they do they are always fun. The Across The Street Bar on Yale Blvd. in Dallas does all ages hardcore shows very frequently. It is a large bar, but the stage is very small, which is... you know.... punk rock.

The record stores, like everything, are scattered throughout the cities that make up the Metroplex.

Good Records on Good Latimer in Dallas sells *MRR* and has some punk stuff. Lots of art rock, and independent music in general. As far as hardcore goes you are going to find mostly commercial stuff, but they will order whatever you want. The atmosphere is very pleasant and they have in store performances.

Forever Young Records is almost overwhelming in that it is as big as a grocery store and I am not exaggerating. It is located in Grand Prairie and is one of the largest record stores in Texas and sells every genre of music imaginable. Downside is you don't know where to start, and every other



MACHINE GUN ROMANTICS

item in there is either "rare" or "imported", so you pay the price.

Awol Records is on Main St. in Deep Ellum and sells CDs and vinyl by Metal, Punk, and Hip Hop bands. They won't let you use their bathroom, so be sure to go beforehand.

Stores that I have not been to but should at least be credited for existing are CD Addict on Josey in Carrolton, and Seasick Records on Prairie St. in Denton. Some scene reporter I am.

Whenever I travel it is really convenient to know where the local vegan friendly eateries are. That's why I'm adding this section. Chris Bland (who did the last Dallas scene report) mentioned that this should be a section of BYOFL and I agree. Here are some of the restaurants not mentioned in the last report and some that were.

Spiral Diner & Bakery an entirely vegan restaurant with fake burgers, spaghetti, shakes and the like. Very well done. Blue Sky Soda is on tap! At the Santa Fe Rail Station in Ft. Worth. www.spiraldiner.com.

Cosmic Cafe is a colorful vegetarian Indian restaurant on Oaklawn. You can't miss it because it's painted very brightly. Not entirely vegan, but the chefs will work around your diet. The vegan cakes are a must order.

Benaka Indian Cuisine serves the best vegetarian Indian food in Irving, possibly the state. Some foods cooked in ghee but can be substituted with oil upon request. The buffet is like no other vegetarian spread on earth, for only $4.99! Warning: More addictive than nicotine. www.benakacuisine.com

Suma Veggie is completely vegan restaurant with standard Chinese cuisine featuring meat analogs in Richardson.

Those who book shows are...Stefan from AKKOLYTE—grindmasterstef@hotmail.com 1127 N. Clinton Ave. Dallas, TX 75208.

Clay Newell, who also has an impressive distro, with all the latest stuff—claynewell@yahoo.com.

And Paul Slifkin books lots of touring bands—fromthepedaltothegrave@yahoo.com

You can always use the venue and space contacts provided. I guess that's about it. Until next time *MRR*... this is Andrew Savage on behalf of the DFW scene saying "up the punx!"

NEWFOUNDLAND

I am going to talk about what is currently happening in St. John's, Newfoundland. Our scene thrives despite the inevitable isolation which results from being located on an island in the seldom traveled maritime provinces of Canada. We are located as far east as you can go in North America and are a day's drive/ferry trip from mainland Canada, in case you didn't know already.

I'll start with NOT ENOUGH BULLETS (NEB)—they aren't a band anymore but they are putting out a 7" this summer called the last stand. Steve and Jamie from NEB play in a band called Beaumont Hamel, with Adam G from Mach Tiver (who are leaving to go on tour this week) on vocals. They play screamy Shotmaker or Torches to Rome influenced hardcore and they rock pretty hard. They have a demo out and are going on tour in the summer, as far as Montreal. Check them out if they are playing in your town. Both Adams are going to be in a really heavy band tentatively called KEVORKA, who kick out the Neurosis / Isis style jams. Jamie and Matt from NEB are in two bands together, FIVE YEAR PLAN!, who play Reversal of Man / Combat Wounded Veteran influenced stuff with a keyboard and GRETTA GARBO, who are doing the Tragedy / From Ashes Rise thing, but with a violin. Both have demos out and are planning on doing a split 7" together this summer.

Power violence lives in St. John's with SKULLFACE, who just put out a demo tape recently on Scum Tribe records. Scum Tribe Records has put out demo tapes by the RIDICULICE (insanely fast drunken hardcore punk), Steve and Kyle, who run Scum Tribe's band NERVE ATTACK as well as Skullface Tape. They have been having benefit shows pretty regularly to raise money to release a split LP between NERVE ATTACK—who play wicked early 80s style hardcore—and scene veterans GRIND TO FIVE (who also have a rad demo out), who play 7 Seconds / Circle Jerks influenced hardcore. It's going to be totally worth picking up.

Mike and Dominic from GRIND TO FIVE play more metal influenced hardcore in scene mainstays THE KILLING who are putting out a new demo sometime this summer. Pete and Chris from GT5 are in a new straight edge band called YOUTH DIVERSION that play late 80s style HXC with sick breakdowns. FIREIGN are holding up the metal fort, playing infrequent but awesome shows and they are put-

NOT ENOUGH BULLETS

ting out a new recording sometime soon and are planning on going on tour this summer, check them out. They are getting a lot of attention and totally deserve it. CORPORAL PUNISHMENT who play Slayer and death metal influenced metal, have a CD coming out soon which should be rad.

Jamie from NEB also plays drums in a Jesus Lizard / Fugazi influenced rock band called TRAILER CAMP (that I think sounds like Swiz) who have a couple of recordings out that are available through Jaimie's label Sick-Tree records. TRAILER CAMP is the brainchild of John from GEINUS, who sound a lot like Steve Albini should be in their band. GEINUS also share members with I LOVE YOU, St. John's favourite drunken stoner rock band.

All ages shows here are well attended to say the least—we get about 150-200 kids a show and bands on tour almost always do amazingly. We have a few venues that we rent like the Curling Club and the Masonic Temple, and the Riverdale Tennis Club in the fall and winter. We are working on getting the money together to get a solid all ages venue for the fall. A lot of bars do shows like CBTGS, The Ship Inn and the Republic, if you want to do that kind of stuff. There are 5or 6 kids here that do shows fairly regularly like Scum Tribe, the Break The Cycle collective and Cold Turkey Records (they mostly handle bigger bands). Break The Cycle have done shows for a bunch of bands like The Attack, Mach Tiver, Buried Inside, Greg MacPhearson and I Was A Spy and can be reached at xmichaelenemyx@yahoo.com or xstevemx@hotmail.com. Despite the hassle it is to get here bands always have fun in our wacky province and bands on tour for the most part have always done well and sell a lot of merch. Seriously, it's crazy how much merch people buy here. If you want anymore information or contact info check out www.nflocals.com or www.709sketch.cjb.net. You can find all of the links and contact info you need on the Nflocals page.

—Michael Phillips

INDIANA

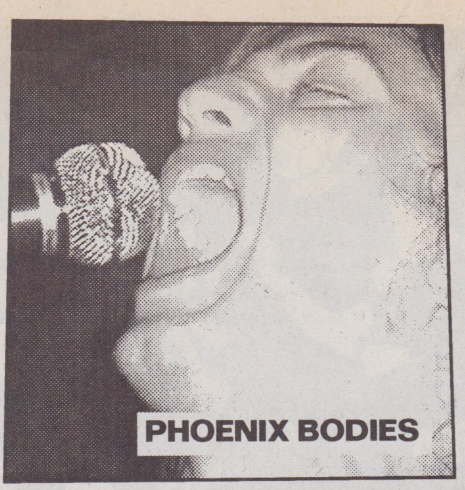
It has been an amazing year for the Circle City punk/hardcore scene and (knock on wood), things are shaping up to be just bigger and better in 2004. It is especially encouraging to see so many of our bands ramping up for a number of national tours throughout all of the coming year. In fact, there are so many great things happening here right now that I found myself having to cut multiple band descriptions out of this scene report just to get it to a length that I thought might be acceptable to *MRR* to print. In doing so, I tried to keep my emphasis on the bands of each respective genre of punk that are actively touring and releasing records. Apologies in advance to those who feel short-changed or overlooked but such was not my intention.

THE DREAM IS DEAD look like they will be leaving for the West Coast in September to record their debut full-length on Escape Artist Records. THE DREAM IS DEAD play unapologetically political blasting Crom-core with a heavy technical punk-grind influence. After a number of EPs, they are dropping a new split 7" records later this year with PREMONITIONS OF WAR sometime before their full-length hits the streets.

MAJHAS are another incredible hardcore band who are winning over new fans left and right. They just released their first full-length record on Hawthorne Street Records a few months ago and have been laying people out flat ever since. Two of the members of MAJHAS were in Indy hardcore legends ICE NINE and the influence is undeniable but not so pronounced as to be a parody. The classic sound of controlled violence put to music is still there but the rhythm section of the band keeps the cacophony in check with enough of a rock groove that it just makes the band that much more powerful. Look for a new split 7" with fellow Hoosiers RACEBANNON this summer too (Happy Couples Never Last).

Speaking of local boys who have made good, RACEBANNON (who were originally from Indianapolis but call Bloomington an hour to the south home now) just got back from rocking domes on the road everywhere. This band is a touring machine in support of their latest CD "Satan's Kickin' Yr Dick In" on Secretly Canadian records. RACEBANNON seem to have a cult following all over the country of kids who just can't seem to get enough of their noisy brand of experimental and avant-garde rock. Love them or hate them, one thing you cannot do is categorize them. Truly

RACE BANNON


PHOENIX BODIES

a band that needs to be heard to be understood.

Ferret Records artist SUICIDE NOTE still pop their heads-up occasionally to play a local show but with the band members currently spread out across the country (only bassist Bob Peele remaining in Indy), they never seem to play as often as I suspect many in the metal/hardcore crowd would like. They are currently in Florida recording a new LP for Ferret Records. PHOENIX BODIES consists of former Mara'akate alumni doing a more punk approach to the more "screamo" sound of their former bands. This band almost never seems to stop touring/playing shows/putting out records. They have too many splits to mention but some off the top of my head include records with Florida's TYRANNY OF SHAW and Europe's SHIKARI. If you haven't heard of them already, you will soon. They just got back from touring Europe and plan to be out on the highways again this winter to the dirty south with THE DREAM IS DEAD.

At one time, Indianapolis was known for its very strong and pronounced vegan straightedge scene. XRISENX however still exists to fly the banner of the vegan straight edge. Formed shortly after the final self-destruction of XBIRTHRIGHTX, RISEN picked up ideologically where BIRTHRIGHT left off. Releasing their debut MCD in 2002 on local vegan straightedge label Catalyst Records and following it up with their split 7" with now defunct fellow edge kids BREAKING AWAY last year, RISEN have consistently kept their vision of hardcore "political" in the face of the ever increasing commercialization of the scene. I hear talk of them recording a full-length soon.

On the more traditional hardcore front, LAST CHANCE TA DANCE and SEE IT THROUGH seem to have been doing quite a job carving out a nice little niche for themselves with the more traditional youth-crew Champion-sweatshirt type crowd. Musically, they play hardcore in the vein of Agnostic Front, Ten Yard Fight, Sick Of It All, etc. Both bands have demo EPs I believe and I'm sure they are eager to do more so if you are a label out there reading this looking for some solid bands of this ilk then check them out.

A scene report on Indianapolis hardcore wouldn't be complete without mentioning the boys in ANGELVILLE. Probably the hardcore band in town currently enjoying the most blanket support across the local hardcore scene-ANGELVILLE play dark thrash/metal influenced hardcore with a definite nod in the direction of Danzig's s/t LP or Samhain but minus the make-up. They released their debut EP "Can't Go Home" (Happy Couples Never Last) earlier this year and plan to record a full length in the fall. They are touring July through August so keep an eye open for them!

I'll move on to the more traditional punk scene now due to space constraints but other great and active Indianapolis hardcore bands of note include HEROES LAID TO REST, AN APPARATUS, YOU WILL DIE (*amazing* instrumental hardcore, Hawthorne Street Records), BRAZIL (Hopeless Records), and HARPER'S FERRY ARSENAL (former BREAKING AWAY kids but now playing political vegan friendly punk in the vein of I-Spy).

FAX ARCANA just dropped a new EP on Alone Records called "The Ritual in Routine". Featuring ex-members of screamo legends USURP SYNAPSE, THE ROMANCE MORGUE, and current MAJHAS—"The Ritual…" serves up six tracks of dark post-punk in the vein of bands Love Life or Pleasure Forever.

THE RETREADS are actually from the college town of Muncie, IN but also have been rocking out for so long that they have been adopted into the Indianapolis scene. THE RETREADS play a very straight forward brand of punk with a very strong and traditional rock and roll influence. I hesitate to say "garage rock" because they walk the line but never cross it. Their latest CD is called "Highway to Helsinki" and available from their website.

PIZZLE are another band that have been around for almost as long as I can remember. They play ugly anti-social punk rock. There are few bands that I would describe as punk rock

without adding some kind of further descriptive adjective but PIZZLE is one of those rare bands that I feel content with just saying "punk rock." If you hate the world and love your beer then PIZZLE is your band.

THE SLURS caused quite a stir a few years ago when they formed slightly after the breakup of garage rockers THE MIGHTY JOHN WAYNES. Taking a cue from Iggy and the Stooges and the Dead Boys, the Slurs spit, drank, and pouted their way to the forefront of the Indianapolis 21 and over punk scene. Currently, they only have a 7" record out but their upcoming full length was being hyped beyond belief so I'm interested in hearing this slab when it is finally unleashed sometime in the nebulous future.

Other local classic punk rock bands of note that play fairly consistently include HATE THE DRAKE, THE SUCKS, WASTELAND D.C., THE JABS, THE AWESOMES, THE GIGGIES, and horror-punks THE CADAVERS.

Summing things up on the band front are the more progressive and melody-influenced punk bands such as PROJECT BOTTLECAP, SPICOLIE, and ABOUT THE FIRE. PROJECT BOTTLECAP released their second full-length "Saving Rock and Roll" (Skeptic) to rave reviews. I can't believe a larger label hasn't snatched these guys up already. SPICOLIE started out as a straight-forward pop-punk band but over the years has grown into something completely different now firmly planted in the realm of melodic post-hardcore ala Thrice, Coheed and Cambria, etc. Finally, ABOUT THE FIRE have been making fellow bands around town want to lay down their guitars and quit playing music after sharing a bill with them. ABOUT THE FIRE's music is so passionate and driving in the vein of a band like Samiam but yet so hooky and firmly rooted in the realm of punk (think Naked Raygun) that I can see these guys becoming the premier punk band here in town after they get some recorded material out. In fact, they drop their debut full-length "Rites of Passage" this month.

Whew! Well, that is it for now. I am going to wrap this novel up here. Apologies to anyone omitted or forgotten, I will get you next time around. Also I'll include something in my next scene report about local labels and record stores. Thanks for reading this kids, come check out what we have going on here in the Circle City; I think it is really something special!

—Clark HCNL

THE DREAM IS DEAD

ENGLAND

London Scene Report

There seem to be a growing number of punk rockers mooching around London at the minute, but many people have noticed that gigs seem to getting emptier. It's as if a lot of people can't be bothered to give new unknown bands a chance, and it's getting increasingly difficult for new punk bands to gain recognition in London, partially due to lack of interest, and partially because there are just too many to try and keep track of.

But in spite of all this, there are a lot of really good local bands in London and the rest of the UK. One of the bands that has really exploded in the last year or two is Household Name Records band FIVE KNUCKLE. This hardcore punk band from Bristol began life in 1998 playing gigs in their local pub before their breakthrough demo All Ages brought them a huge amount of recognition, and they were soon snapped up by HHN. Since then they've toured with some pretty big bands, such as Capdown, The Distillers and 7 Seconds. Their latest release, Balance, has maintained the catchy hardcore sound that their fans love, and has been getting really good feedback from most people.

Another small band that have rocketed recently are the very international FIREAPPLE RED from North London. They play fast metal-tinged hardcore with the occasional obligatory hint of ska, and although countless bands have tried to harness this sound, FIREAPPLE RED are one of the few who can pull it off. With members from all over the world and a steadily multiplying fan base, they have gone from playing small DIY gigs in grotty London venues to supporting Good Riddance, and playing at Donnington at the legendary UK metal festival Download, with the likes of Slayer, Machine Head and Metallica. They are a breath of fresh air amid the current influx of melodic hardcore bands from the North. But even though there are droves of generic hardcore bands springing up everywhere, there are plenty of fresh lively ones to keep them at bay, notably, veterans of the London HC scene 17 STITCHES, who churn out really fast angry noise, which actually sounds fantastic. They are still frantically gigging away, playing a mixture of local gigs, squats, and larger support slots, such as UK punk fest Holidays in the Sun in 2003. Currently signed to Dislocate Records, and set to play CBGBs in the near future, the STITCHES are still failing to disappoint, as are hardcore punk heroes THE FILAMENTS, whose amalgamation of scratchy vocals, gritty guitars, punchy brass section and catchy

sing-along songs have led to them being signed to Household Name, who're releasing their latest offering What's Next, but they certainly didn't need any help in drawing in crowds of a few hundred shouting fans. There are indications that THE FILAMENTS might be steering slightly towards ska with their new album, but hopefully they won't lose touch with their hardcore roots.

I don't think that someone can attempt to write about the UK scene without mentioning the female fronted NO COMPLY, signed to Deck Cheese Records, who remind me of a more hardcore version of Tsunami Bomb with better singing. They've been working really hard recently, and although they don't bring in more than seventy or eighty people, they have headlined the notorious London Underworld, which has hosted such names as Agnostic Front, the Anti Nowhere League and the re-mastered Misfits outfit. Their latest conquest was opening at the world famous European Deconstruction Tour, which delighted their young but loyal fan base. Despite NO COMPLY's current success, they've remained very genuine, and can usually be spotted lurking nervously outside their own gigs before hand.

All of the above bands are pretty well known, particularly in London, but there's another bracket of popular but more underground hardcore punk bands who play at parties and squats, the most well known probably being the Poison Club in North London, which frequently puts on gigs with bands such as the toilet humor-loving SHORT BUS WINDOW LICKERS, HACKNEY SEX PEST, and THE RESTARTS, who chuck in a bit of ska for good measure, along with bands from all over the world.

All in all, no matter how much the pessimists grumble about trendy kids and the lack of good gigs choking the London punk scene, you can always find a decent gig, a new club, people just hanging out drinking listening to music and a sense of community, and that's good enough for me.

—Aisha

JAPAN INVADES SE ASIA... AGAIN

BATTLE OF DISARM, POWER OF IDEA, & VOCO PROTESTA TOUR REPORT

In March, **Battle of Disarm**, **Power of Idea** and **Voco Protesta** made their way to SE Asia to set the record straight—Koizumi doesn't speak for us all! With only one week to spread the good will and a fuckload of countries to visit, that's a tall order, so we had to settle on Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia. Schucks.

Things got under way with a two am arrival in Singapore, a sleepless night on the hard cold floor at the airport and an early morning flight to Jakarta. Flying to Jakarta is ridiculously expensive, considering the distance from Singapore and the ability of most people (at least in Indonesia) to pay such large sums. Everyone else on that flight was getting to their morning business development meeting. But touring is a business, too, right? Ain't no time for boats! (There's more truth in that than anyone wants to admit.)

There was a lot of nervous anticipation that morning, since no one knew what to expect from Indonesia. Just getting through immigration was like a bad omen or something; they lost one person's fees receipt and the power cut out in the middle of processing another's visa. And they're hassling us the whole time like it's our fault. I guess the punks get the same treatment no matter where they go. Once we actually got spit out of that meat grinder and were released upon the unsuspecting Indonesians, we were hit with wave after wave of conflicting experiences. Everyone's already arm in arm, doing the picture thing in the airport lobby, which has the whole place staring at the crazy punks from afar, but we're already joking and laughing with these kids we've never met before. There's nothing like punk rock bonding.

I think some of us thought we'd be crammed onto crowded busses to get into the city, but surprisingly, we are whisked away in a number of different cars—so here is where it starts getting creepy in that "rock star" way... we arrive at a house that has been cleared out just to make room for everyone to crash there and we're immediately treated to great home cooked Indonesian food... made vegan, no less, not because any punks in Indonesia are even veg-

etarian, but because they knew some of us were. Everyone is super friendly, and lots of smiles and botched attempts to bridge the language barrier abound. So these people are being really genuine, and the camaraderie feels really good, but this is supposed to be the first time bands from out of the country have come to play in Indonesia, so you can't not ask yourself what the rock star factor is. There is no way to objectively answer that... it's clearly not as bad as Japan, where people will actually ask you for autographs (and "DIY" punks often oblige!), but they *will* ask you for the shirt off your back in Indonesia!

My own subjective interpretation was that, contrary to what you might expect from a place where touring bands is a brand new phenomenon, the exchanges we had and the relationships we built (albeit you can't build much of a relationship in a day) were surprisingly genuine. I think that's because punk rock carries a significantly different meaning in Indonesia: third world economics mean that there's not going to be the collector mentality amongst people who come to see you, and peoples' disposition in general is geared much more around just being with other people as opposed to checking off another band on their list of punk rock shows they can brag about. Case in point was the two people who grilled me about being vegan—they told me how ridiculous that was in no uncertain terms instead of asking me how they could become vegan too. Then they stole me some plantains and we all ate and laughed together.

The difference between the punk rock most of us are used to and Indonesian punk rock really hit home when we got to the show. We had laughed a hearty laugh at rumors that upward of 3,000 people would come to the show, but... upward of 3,000 were at the show! Holy shit. The organizers said that 10,000 were expected, but, as was to be our unfortunate luck in Malaysia too, government elections were unexpectedly scheduled on the same day. Fearing riots, the police cancelled our original (outside) venue, so "only" 3,000 people knew about the new location (which organizers secured within 24 hours! Props to the great job Mandra and Eco did!). The only lingering regret is that it would have been pretty cool to say we sparked a riot on election day... heh.

So there is obviously something different going on when 3,000 kids show up for an average show. A large majority of these kids are street punks (in the most legitimate sense of the word, unlike the trust fund kids spare changing on Telegraph avenue in Berkeley... oh that's so punk…), and that's where I lose all perspective. There is no comparison that can be made to that kind of thing, and maybe that's for the best, since I'm sure it'll lose its meaning soon enough anyway. What felt really good about it was that it somehow felt genuinely chaotic (or maybe that's just because of the cops that came to shut things down early and the ensuing mess), and the hand-to-mouth desperateness of the punks there wasn't a put-on like it usually is in the West (but a big "fuck you" to the Global Exchange-type liberals who want me to champion a statement like that). What felt not so good was the 100's of offers to trade the shirts off our backs and being surrounded like we were circus animals. In that context, it's hard to interact as equals—as fellow punks, but the fuck if we are equals given the fucked up economic superiority Japan and the West has over nations like Indonesia. In that sense, I couldn't have blamed anyone if they had beaten us up and took all our money.

Most of the kids who came to see this particular show had no idea who these Japanese bands were, and had come for reasons that probably escape outside analysis. I have very schizophrenic feelings about their scene, since on one hand I absolutely *love* to see punk rock carry a meaning that is unique to that part of the world, and for it to be something to the Indonesians that it is not to those of us in the West. That is, if punk rock is serving as the West's gentrifying force across the globe, at least Indonesians have done something else with it that we can't wrap a neat analysis around. What bothers me, though, is that it is probably inevitable that as more bands start to tour there that we will in fact serve to ruin the uniqueness of Indonesian punk and we will in fact begin the process of gentrifying their scene. It's supposed to be a victory when punks start touring in some new country, but I'm not so sure the goal is to have globally hegemonic punk or some bullshit like that. Why do we get so excited hearing about punk rock in some crazy new country? Why aren't we asking ourselves if punk rock is really all that appropriate to people whose cultures are so vastly different from ours? Perhaps if corrupt mainstream values from the West are already seething into these places, it's nice to see our counterculture offered as an alternative, but I think I'd rather see an authentic and culturally relevant rebellion in response instead of one constructed with the instructions outlined in *Maximum Rocknroll*. And hell, as long as it's rebelling, it's still punk rock.

Obviously, our brief stay in Indonesia gave us a lot of food for thought. It was bittersweet in that we had some great interactions, but realizing that you are part of a cultural vanguard is not a good feeling.

The next show was back in Singapore, where things couldn't have been more different. The venue was inside of a crazy modern exposition hall—carpeted, air conditioned, sparkling brand new ridiculousness. Fucking Disney on Ice was right next door. The punks didn't even seem to scare Disney comers—they must have thought we were hip stage-hands. Such is Singapore—the gem (or hellhole, depending on your perspective) of the region; its legendary cleanliness leaves you feeling like it is so generic and lacking of character that you might be in Hong Kong, Tokyo… who knows.

Singapore is definitely a slice of the West right in the middle of SE Asia, and you almost expect the scene to be the same as it is at home. What little of it there is strikingly similar; however it's quite interesting to hear that punk shows are somewhat rare and that the skinhead scene is much bigger these days. There certainly isn't a feeling that there is much of a cultural divide, and no real sense that you need to be worried about your brand of punk rock getting misinterpreted. In fact, it was clear that Singapore punks and Japanese punks have a lot in common, such as small DIY scenes, scarcity of venues to organize shows at, and no real ability to get by without working and living apart from your co-conspirator punk rock friends, the latter of which is a huge stumbling block for the scene's growth in either country.

Musically, you could tell that the Singapore bands had been doing the punk rock thing for as long as anyone else, **Minus** being one band that has been around forever and is still as good as they were on day one, which is really rare. Fucking classic punk rock! Also, lots of props to the **Demisor** crew, who played an intimidating set (wow! I thought they were going to grind my head into the floor!) and then proceeded to be some of the most hospitable folks you'd ever imagine. Heartfelt thanks to all the bands who played with us: **Obscene**, **Topsy Turvy**, **Desolution**, **Social Integration** and **Two Face Bastard**. Oh, and I learned a great new dance where I can dominate the pit: grab your partner by the lapel (and vice versa) and swing around as fast as you can til one of you falls, but don't let go—yank your partner up and down, beating them against the ground. Bloodied mohawks coming to your town soon.

Malaysia, land of never-ending rubber tree plantations, was perhaps not what one might expect, since it has what is probably the oldest punk rock scene out of any "third world" (whatever) nation, yet there are still many signs of a young scene... something like half way between Indonesia and Singapore. Again, unexpected national elections completely screwed up our schedule, resulting in shifted shows, missed plane flights and all the chaos you only get on the best tours. Our Kuala Lumpur venue was one of the only ones in the country that would let us play on election day, supposedly because of its mafia connections... that's punk! When we arrived, some kids were spray painting a huge anti-cop mural across the street right in the middle of the day! There was an organized group of squatters soliciting donations and support for what is some very rare (for Malaysia) political activism, which is a sign that there is clearly a certain maturity in the scene that even surpasses Singapore in a way. On the other hand, I had a conversation with some kids who had no idea what *Maximum Rocknroll* was.

In an environment like that, where there is obviously already a great amount of sophistication in the scene, yet there is still a lot of growth taking place, it's quite a bit more difficult to gauge what one's impact is and to what degree our presence represented a Japanese/Western cultural influence or not. At one moment, it felt like the damage had already been done, and at the next it felt like there were all kinds of new dialogs that were happening around us. Of course, once you've taken the dive and are playing shows in Malaysia, all you can do is make a best-faith effort to really communicate with your hosts and get to know their scene.

The scenester thing that went on around the kids selling records, shirts and merch was a bit

disconcerting in that I had thought that there wouldn't be quite so much pretentiousness in Malaysia, but I guess that's pretty much par for the course with most scenes. Scenesters or not, we had a great couple days with our hosts **Minus** and **Parkinson** and met plenty of unassuming down-to-earth folks. Two chances to play with both **Minus** and **Parkinson** (if you like grind and you do not have any **Parkinson**, I feel sorry for you) was fucking amazing, and if I knew who the band was who started their Kuala Lumpur set by shouting "FUCK ISRAEL!" I'd be touting their name here, but the band order was all fucked up, so sorry! **Appäratus** had the most amazing vocalist ever… or at least since **Nausea**! Can't wait to hear them again some day.

One other very striking thing about Malaysia (as well as Singapore) was the very obvious presence of Islam in the scene. That includes marriage, where wimmin often wear head scarves and do most all the cooking, although the wimmin I hung out with were by no means pathetic, sullen and repressed—quite the contrary in fact. There doesn't appear to be much dialog as of yet about religion and how it fits into punk rock, although I would expect that if that happens, it will come from Singapore, where it appears easier to be agnostic. Perhaps Shaiful, *Maximum Rocknroll*'s intrepid SE Asia scene reporter, will regale us with his tale of having gotten death threats by trying to start the conversation in his zine! Yikes.

While to most of us in the West (except moronic "Chrisitan punk rockers") punk rock and *any* religion are diametrically opposed, clearly many Malaysian punks have not felt that way, and have integrated punk with their faith. Is this necessarily a bad thing? It's condescending to frame it as if they are "just learning" about punk and will some day discard their religion. Even though punks in the West would reject all religion, why do Malaysian punks have to do the same? Who anointed us the world's punk cops enforcing our punk rock mono-sub-culture on these kids who "just don't get it"? We may not understand how Islam and punk work together, but I think I remember that we're supposed to be open-minded, right? Even if I am over dramatizing the religion thing, the point is that the assumption that it's a good thing that punk rock means the same thing to kids all over the world is bullshit. And I sincerely hope that the increasing number of Western bands (**Rambo** was soon to follow us) streaming through SE Asia don't ruin what little diversity there is in the global punk rock community.

Speaking of which, **Voco Protesta** actually have a unique twist on punk rock diversity: their lyrics are entirely in Esperanto! The obvious question being asked is why so many bands in non-English-speaking countries sing in English... The **Voco Protesta** kids have the guts to speak their minds on stage in an age where most bands who do so are endlessly ridiculed—cheers to them! **Battle of Disarm** cannot ever be dismounted from the throne of classic political punk; no matter how many times you hear them, you can't help but raise your fist and head for the pit. It was definitely great to deepen relationships with them. Great big shout-out to Oliver from **Cluster Bomb Unit**, who played drums for **Power of Idea** with the most energy I've seen from a drummer ever. So much that it seemed hilarious, but he was not joking when he stood on top of his set, yelling at the audience! No wonder the kids were whipped into a frenzy of stage dives and moshing! And, of course, we are all in eternal debt to our dear hosts and organizers Mandra and Eco in Indonesia, Jimbo (**Parkinson**), Jasman, Rina and Mirza (**Minus**), Fahmy (the assassin) and family (**Demisor**), and the countless others who took a lot of time out of their busy lives to make our tour happen and let us turn their small apartments into chaotic crash pads. Oh, and news flash from SE Asia—yes, sandals *are* punk rock!

—Paul Lesneski

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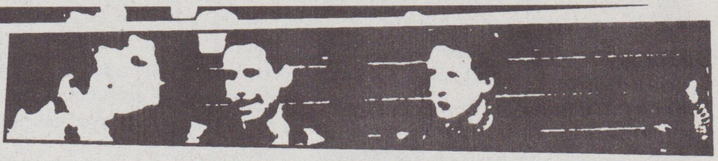
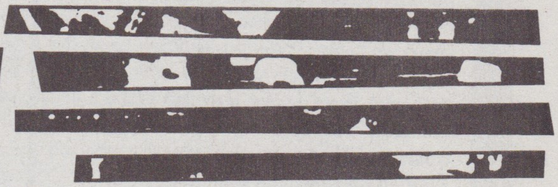

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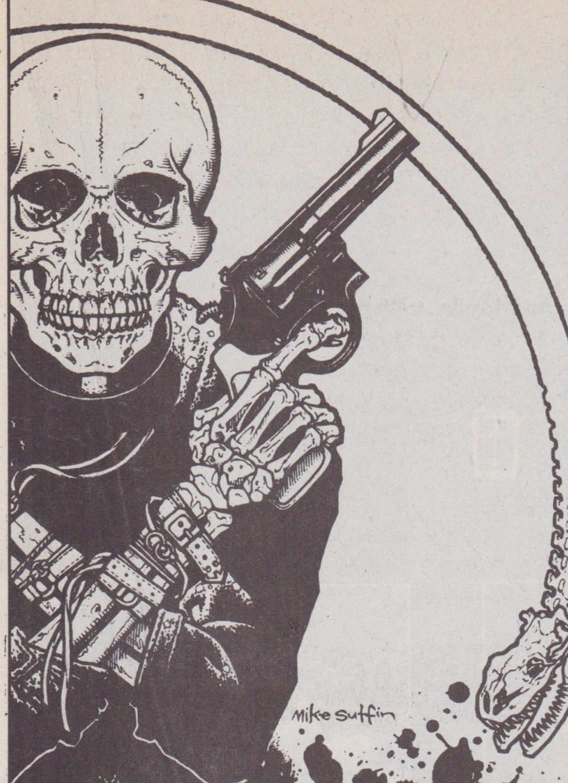

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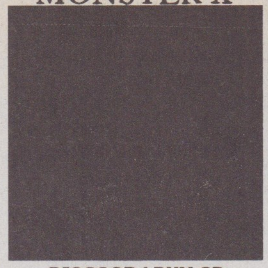

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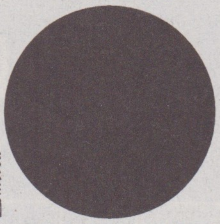

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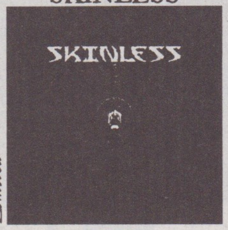

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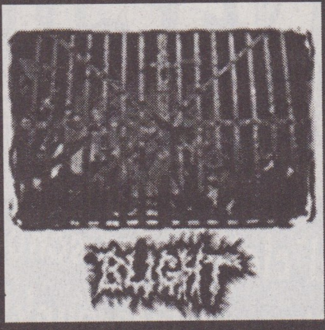

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ESKAPO

ESKAPO is one of few American hardcore bands that takes on international politics with the rage of a colonized people and knows what they're talking about. That's because they sing in Tagalog. The Philippines was the first country in Asia to fall victim to Western Imperialism when Spanish conquistadors raped the islands and installed Catholicism in 1565. U.S. forces later annexed the Philippines in 1899, the Japanese set up at puppet "Philippine Republic" in 1943, and U.S. navel and air bases remain on the islands to this day.

Luckily for the members of ESKAPO, four of whom grew up in or around Manila, with all of this colonization also came punk rock, thrash, and hardcore. ESKAPO started when its members found their way to Vallejo California. Rupert Estanislao, brothers Loi and Max Fajardo, and England Hidalgo were born in the Philippines, Bruce Webb was born in Japan, and Luke Winders was born in California. Now, ESKAPO brings melodic hardcore with an anti-imperialist message to Bay Area shows from the piNoisepop Asian-American Music Festival to 924 Gilman and Libertatia.

I interviewed ESKAPO after they returned from their first international tour to Tijiuana and Tecate and asked them about the Philippines' punk scene, the Vallejo scene, Pinoy pride, and the release of their first album. Interview by Anna Sophie Loewenberg. Photos by David Huang and Anna Sophie Loewenberg

To contact Eskapo go to www.Eskapo.com

ESKAPO: Refugee; Political party in the Philippines that escaped Marcos' oppressive government

MRR: Now that your first album is out, what are some of your favorite songs on *Kalayan?*

Rupert: "Pangulo" is the first song off of the new album, and it means "President" in Tagalog. It parallels the Spanish occupation, which later turned into the American annexation of the Philippines, to what's going on now with Iraq and the undeclared war in the Philippines with America occupying it.

MRR: England, you did most of the artwork on the album. What is the cover about?

England: There's a prisoner leaning on a wall, there are chains on his ankles, and the six skulls on the ground represent the six members of ESKAPO. Death imagery is so important for my artwork because it's the death of my culture, and the death of identity.

Loi: I want to say something about the cover! We did that cover because you see this man handcuffed, and his ankles chained, and the CD is *Kalayan*, which means "liberation" and "freedom," and that guy has no freedom.

MRR: What are some of the other images on the album about?

Loi: One came from searching for images from the Bataan Death March, and that caught my eye because it shows what happened during the Bataan Death March. There were a lot of soldiers, and civilians, and they had to carry everybody on their backs to save them. For "Pangulo" you see Marcos and Imelda, it's very political.

MRR: What it the song Bataan Death March about?

Rupert: *Bataan Death March* is to those of us who have grandfathers and grandmothers who went through the Bataan Death March, who walked from San Fernando Valley to Bataan, to Manila. It's for all the people who died, and the lyrics say: "In the hands of the foreigner, in the claws of the Japanese, their hands bled, but they still walked." It's a historical piece about the horrors the Imperial Japanese forces wrought upon my people during World War 2.

Luke: We're revolution party music.

MRR: What's your favorite song on the album?

Max: I guess it's "Drunkard's Ball" because I'm starting to be an alcoholic. Just playing, but I do like the song. It's unity for the drunks.

England: "Baril at Dasal."

MRR: How did you guys get into punk rock and hardcore?

Rupert: My first show was in the Philippines in People's Park. It was the PHILIPINE VIOLATORS in the early 90's. I used to get my tapes in the mall on Edsa Blvd. or in Recto because they would sell underground Filipino comp tapes from T.R.C. (Twisted Red Cross), one of the first homegrown DIY labels in the Philippines. And I'd buy EXODUS, DEATH ANGEL and SUICIDAL TENDENCIES.

England: I think that my first punk show was in the Philippines back when I was in 6th grade. It was more aggressive, with crazy riots and throwing bottles in the air. I saw RAZORBACK BAZURAK, they're fucking thrash, and those bands, like Rupert's friends KNK (KABAONG NI KAMATAYAN, or "Coffin of Death"), PHILIPINE VIOLATORS, SKREWHEADS, DEAD ENDS.

Rupert: A lot of the bands from the Philippines were political. During the 1980's, during the Martial Law era, this independent label called Twisted Red Cross put on a demonstration/ protest/festival called "Rescue Ladders and Human Baricades" which featured a lot of our influences like THE WUDS, PHILIPINE VIOLATORS, DEAD ENDS, PRIVATE STOCK, URBAN BANDITS, INTOXICATION OF VIOLENCE. And when they get political, they get serious, because over there the politicians and police are all corrupt. It's fucking dog-eat-dog, so their lyrics come from a place of heart and gut.

Max: When I started playing in ESKAPO, I started listening to hardcore and punk for the drumbeats and fills, but I still listen to hip-hop, especially Tupac Shakur.

MRR: Once you all made it to California, how did you meet and start Eskapo?

Rupert: We started when I first met Loi. I was with Mike, our former guitar player, and Gil, another former member, we came over to Loi's. We were in high school, and there aren't a lot of Filipinos around Vallejo, or in general, who listen to any kind of hardcore or extreme music. So I saw this bald-headed Filipino dude playing basketball wearing a PANTERA shirt or something, and I was like, "Hey! You like that kind of music?" And he was like "Yeah," so we became friends. I spent the night over here that night and we talked about music and talked about

forming a band. Then Loi went to community college and he learned how to play guitar.

MRR: So what kind of music do most Filipino kids around here listen to?

Rupert: Hip-hop and shitty R&B.

Loi: No, it's not like that man. Most Filipinos listen to the mainstream type of music.

Rupert: Yeah, which is shitty!

MRR: Have you guys always liked hardcore and punk rock?

Rupert: Pretty much. I like a lot of metal and I like a lot of punk. Back in the Philippines I liked a lot of local bands, PHILIPINE VIOLATORS, YANO, and the WUDS.

Max: No, I used to listen to hip-hop, like Tupac. When I used to go to school, I always used to play on the table, like drumbeats, and then Loi noticed that I liked playing beats and stuff. Then they asked me to join ESKAPO.
Now I like WHAT HAPPENS NEXT, MINOR THREAT, and I like PAROKYA NI EDGAR ("Edgar's Parochial School"). The guy from WHAT HAPPENS NEXT really influenced me. I saw them at Gilman.

MRR: How did the rest of you get involved with Eskapo?

Luke: How I got involved was, I knew Rupert and I knew he had a band, and I booked them.

MRR: How did you know Rupert?

Luke: I knew him at Walmart, when he used to work there. And I was hella rude to him I guess.

Rupert: Yeah, you were.

Luke: And then later I think Josh Castro knew who he was.

Rupert: He's from the band OUR TURN.

Luke: And then I met him again, and he was really cool, and the first time I talked to him, we talked for hella long, about stuff, about music and shit. I was in EXIT WOUNDS and I booked them at a show in my dad's backyard in December 1997 and then, three months later, they decided they needed a bass player because at that time they were sharing the bass. Loi and Mike were alternating playing bass and guitar, so they asked me to join.

Bruce: I don't know, it was really one of those, "you touch me, I touch you, but don't tell anyone," kind of a thing. No, it was kinda like, back then, ESKAPO wasn't really doing anything, it was kind of like, unenthusiastic and they were a '77 style band. So I didn't do anything then. But a couple of years later, when I started working at Marine World, I thought "hell, I'll just play anyway" so I asked Rupert, of course I got to know the guys a little better.

MRR: Eskapo seems to be infiltrating corporate America. So Luke came in through Walmart and you came in through the "Marine World"?

Bruce: Rupert worked there, Max worked there, our friend Bob worked there. But I first met Rupert in 1998, we were at some café in Benecia, and I see this little, short Filipino sharp skin, or whatever, and he starts talking to my friend Bob and he's like "I've never seen many punks around here," we just clicked after that.

England: When I first got here [to the U.S.] I was looking for Filipinos who listened to punk rock and hardcore. I couldn't find any, then I saw a flyer for one of their shows at Burnt Ramen, and it said "Filipino Hardcore." Then I told my friend Alex, from *Charmin*. I told him, hey, I found a band called ESKAPO, he said, shit, I know them, I went to Burnt Ramen and saw their show.

Bruce: We've ended up phasing-out a lot of the old ESKAPO songs. I listen to a lot of hardcore, crust, power grindcore from outside of this country because it's so energetic and there's so much more to it. But basically I was listening to bands like PHOBIA, DESTROY, CODE 13, LOS CRUDOS, all of those types of bands. I think it's getting more and more worldwide. Already you're getting a lot of bands from Latin America who have been doing that for a long time, you see lots of bands from Asia, even in places like India and Nepal, places you never even thought of.

MRR: What does "eskapo" mean, and why did you choose that name for your band?

Loi: Eskapo means "escape" in English, or you can always say, "refugee."

Rupert: Eskapo is also a film by Chito Rono.

Loi: But we didn't take the name because of the movie.

Rupert: I agreed to the name, and later on it made a lot of sense because the movie is about two political prisoners from the Philippines who had to escape the tyranny of Ferdinand Marcos.

Loi: Eskapo means that too, prisoners of the Marcos Regime.

England: Most of the members of ESKAPO are from the Philippines, so I think that it's about being an immigrant.

Rupert: I came to the States in March of 1993, I was just turning 16.

Max: I was 12, I came in 1991 or 1992.

MRR: What was it like seeing your first shows in America?

Max: I remember we went to Gilman, and we saw these Japanese bands, and even though they sang in another language people still liked them. That was cool.

Loi: The first show Rupert and I went to was SKANKIN' PICKLE.

Rupert: Yeah, it was SKANKIN PICKLE, JANITORS AGAINST APARTHEID, and the RUDIMENTS at the Trocardero in SF for three dollars.

Luke: I was there too.

Rupert: Yeah, you were there too, I remember! I was like, there's that asshole!

Luke: That was the real first time I ever met you.

Loi: I think it was 1996.

Rupert: I just graduated high school, and Loi was working.

Loi: That was our very first punk show.

Rupert: That was our first show and I remember, I was so nervous that I pissed my pants because the bathroom was so far and there was a lot of white people dancing and moshing and at first it freaked me out!

Loi: It was a new experience for me, because you get to see people of different races united. Everybody was one with the crowd.

Rupert: Then we brought Max to a bunch of FURY 66 shows. Then me and Loi used to go every week.

MRR: Did you ever experience racism at punk shows because you're Filipino?

Rupert: There was one incident. It was THE CRIMINALS, AGAINST ALL AUTHORITY, BLANKS 77, and a couple of opening bands at Gilman. And Loi and I were speaking in Tagalog at Gilman, and we never really get shit for it, even if it is majority white people. But there were these dudes in back of us who were in line for the merch table and they were like "Hurry up and buy, hurry up and buy!" Like in a real mocking tone. They said it to us because we were speaking in Tagalog. I didn't really appreciate that. A lot of people assume that we're Japanese before we play. But when we play, I usually announce that we're not Japanese.

MRR: Why do you sing in Tagalog?

Loi: For me, it's to show that we are Filipino. It's to show that we can speak Tagalog, it's to show that, if there's a Filipino listening to us, or watching our music, it's to let them know that we sing in Tagalog, and they should do the same thing.

Rupert: I write a lot of the lyrics, and for me, it helps me remember a lot of my language. And like Loi said, if your out there and you feel like you're alone and you're listening to different music than most of your peers, if you hear our stuff, maybe you can relate to us as immigrants, or as a punk, that's cool, that's what we're out there doing. Also, it's in Tagalog because we weren't born here, we were born in the

Philippines, and we speak Tagalog regularly. It's not just like we speak Tagalog to be more Filipino, we speak it because that's our language.

Loi: Why not sing it, if we can speak it?

England: I think it's easier to express ourselves speaking Tagalog.

Max: We sing in Tagalog because we're Filipino and we're proud of our language.

Loi: I remember, we used to have more English songs, and only a few Tagalog songs. But ever since we met these Filipino punks like Von, he came here and was really surprised that we were a hardcore Filipino band but we only a few Tagalog songs, so we started writing more. Then, after we learned about piNoisepop, we found there was a scene,where a Filipino-American band can show their talent.

MRR: What's piNoisepop?

Rupert: PiNoisepop is a big music festival. It was started by Jesse and Ogie Gonzales so that Asian American artists and musicians could network, and meet each other and play together. It's through that festival that we've met bands like FLATTBUSH, CHARMIN, DOGS OF IRE, SIGNAL 3, KADENA and LOST IN AMERICA. Also, other friends like FRIDAY NIGHTS, CLAREDON HILLS, and SKYFLAKES.

Loi: Our first piNoisepop was 2001 at Bindelstiff.

Rupert: Bindelstiff is a Filipino-American cultural center that holds workshops for kids, film, poetry readings, it's mainly a theater.

Loi: We were very surprised because we saw so many Filipinos in the crowd, and we don't usually see many Filipinos watching us play.

Rupert: The first time we ever played at piNoisepop, I decided that I would play in my underwear. I started stripping towards the end of the set, no one was moshing so I just ran around, and fell on some girl, and she said I had the sweatiest ass.

Max: I guess that they were surprised about the moshing and all of that, because afterward, Jesse told me that that was the first time they saw moshing there.

MRR: How did it feel to see so many Filipino-American bands for the first time?

Rupert: Like seeing SIGNAL 3, that was the best moment ever!

Loi and Max: Yeah, that was the best

Rupert: Because Loi got me SIGNAL 3's *Convergance Zone* CD. By the way.
SIGNAL 3 are an all-Filipino, anti-racist, skinhead Oi-band, and they're from L.A.
They broke-up, but the first time I heard of them was when Loi brought me their CD for Christmas. Later on, Jesse asked us if we wanted to play with SIGNAL 3 and KADENA, we were like, "Hell Yeah!" So we played with them at Burnt Ramen, thanks to John the Baker, and it was fucking awesome.

Max: I remember the first time I saw SIGNAL 3 singing *"Kapit Kamay"* I was hella proud because it was about Filipinos uniting.

Rupert: KADENA was awesome, they're a Filipino street-punk band, they have very political, intelligent lyrics. It was great to be able to see them and be like *"Nag tatagalog sila!"* They speak Tagalog and they're hella cool guys, and they're proud of the working class plight.

MRR: Do you consider yourselves a Filipino band?

Bruce: You could think of ESKAPO as 5/6th Asian, we're most Pacific Islander. I'm half Japanese. As for other ethnicities, I'm African-American, East-Indian, Irish, German, Italian, and three Native-American tribes. But I don't think that ethnicity is too big of an issue. This was a band started by three Filipinos, but they also do a lot of things about other countries too.

MRR: How about the punk scene in Vallejo?

Luke: 4,5,6 years ago, there was a cool punk scene in Vallejo. But everyone was in high school, or freshly out of high school. But people seem to lose their enthusiasm as they get older. There were bands like HAPPY ACCIDENT, THE HAVE NOTS, and EXIT WOUNDS which I used to be in.

Rupert: In the San Francisco punk scene there are a lot of crusties, and people are really cool. They've welcomed us. In Vallejo there isn't much of a scene anymore. Out of all those bands, we're pretty much the last band standing. And I think that was because a lot of them were high school bands, and when they got older, they grew out of it, they abandoned music.

Luke: Statistically, Vallejo is one of the most diverse cities in the U.S. Culture is way lower, some people care about art and culture, but not as much as in San Francisco.

MRR: How did you get involved in the *In the Name of Revolution* compilation?

Rupert: The comp is put out by Dirty Shoes Records and Bulacan Records. It was put out on the 10th Anniversary of the New People's Army, which is the militant arm of the CPP(Communist Party of the Philippines). So the comp also goes to benefit the bands from the Philippines on it, which are MINORITY BLOCKS from Cebu, who play street-punk with Communist/red/leftist lyrics, DISABUSE, which are along the same lines but play brutal grindcore from Manila, and THE TARTARS from Bulacan who play Oi! . From the U.S. bands, there's FLATTBUSH from L.A., they play socialist grind with a little bit of John Zorn thrown in there, and KADENA from New York. So the profits go to benefit those people in the Communist coalition of the Philippines. It costs them about two weeks of wages just to get the comp over here.

MRR: So what can you say in Tagalog Luke?

Luke: *Ako si Luke. Ako si pangit.*

MRR: How was your first tour to Tijiuana with La Plebe in April?

Bruce: Tijuana was great. You hear every misconception on TV saying, Tijuana is hella ghetto, or it's a bad place. But when we went there, there was nothing bad about it. It was a beautiful place, the kids were really enthusiastic, they wanted us to play and we wanted to be there, so it was all good. The first night we played, there were a lot of ska and cover bands. The second night we had a grind-core band, and an old school hardcore band. I know that those bands are out there, it's just a matter of getting to them.

Loi: It's just like going back home. It's like the Philippines in almost every way, except for the weather. In Manila it's really hot. You see people selling stuff, food, and newspapers on the street and everything, just like in the Philippines.

Max: I feel like I belong there, like home. Their food is good too, nothing like Taco Bell.

Loi: For me, I think they accepted us, because we're different. We didn't sing all English songs, we sang in Tagalog. They were just surprised because they were hearing two different languages, English and Tagalog. But then, when they started hearing our songs, and some of the words in our songs are similar to their language. They began liking us. They just went wild after that.

Luke: It was golden, cats.

MRR: So they could understand some of your lyrics in Tijuana?

Loi: Oh hell yeah. Because Magellan is from Spain. When he conquered the Philippines, he taught a lot of people about Christianity, and he of course taught everybody Spanish. I know a lot of people in the Philippines, they speak Spanish and Tagalog.

Rupert: Since we're been playing with LA PLEBE, we've been exposed to the Latino-punk community. I think we take to them and they take to us because we're people of color. And there are a lot of Filipino kids who come now, but I think that there are also all kinds of kids, because I think that what this band shows the most is unity, how all of us all different, but we still represent a lot different things.

Loi: Now our scene is more defined by bands like FLATTBUSH, and LA PLEBE, of course, we love LA PLEBE. LA PLEBE are Spanish hard-core mixed with ska, kind of like OPERATION IVY. Ever since we play with them for the first time, it's like brotherhood. We really go together since their Mexican and we're Filipino, and we're minorities. It feels like we're at home whenever we play with LA PLEBE and of course with CHARMIN, and other Filipino bands.

Max: We're looking forward to touring more of the U.S., but also in the Philippines. I want to go next year to tour in the Philippines.

THE CARPETTES

An Interview With George Maddison
By Jim Devlin

MRR: How did The Carpettes first get together?
George: We were all at the same school, in the North of England, at the same time in the mid seventies.

MRR: Was the band formed with any particular vision in mind?
George: No vision, just glad to get people to listen to us. We were grateful for any gig we could get. If you want an idea of a vision, the best I can give you was that our first rehearsals consisted of cover versions of songs by just two artists: THE RAMONES and GENE VINCENT!

MRR: Did you expect the band to be a full time career, or was it all just for fun?
George: Of course it was just for fun! We were just starting out and had no great plan. You've got to realize that we were living in a very unfashionable area of England, with very little Rock'N'Roll tradition. It was difficult to get people to even listen in those days.

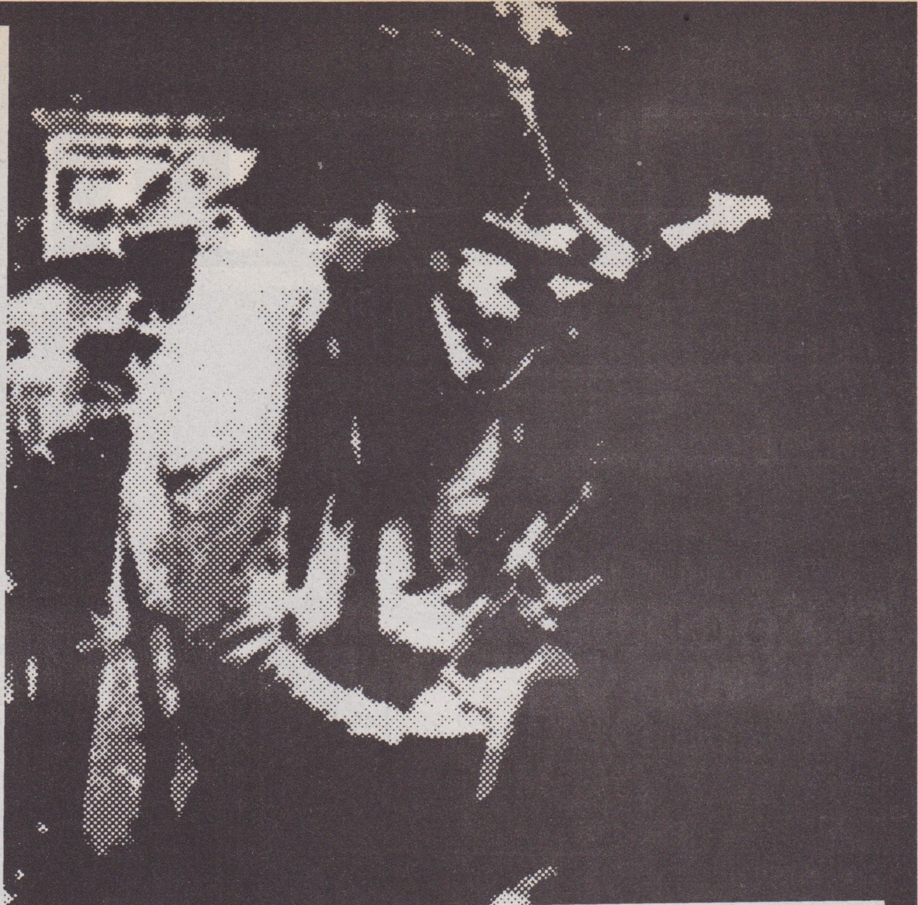
MRR: What is it like playing with "that gray haired fudd" (*This is Jimmy's description of Neil. I believe it's a Scottish expression!*)
George: I've known him since he was about 15 years old. We've got a lot of history. On stage, he's the ultimate professional! Offstage, we should agree to differ about certain things...if you know what I mean.

MRR: What were the bands original influences?
George: As I said before, the first rehearsal session tells you a lot. THE RAMONES and GENE VINCENT! We were also heavily influenced by bands like DR. FEELGOOD and EDDIE & THE HOT RODS. Anything that got you away from the pompous, overblown mid-seventies "progressive/ heavy rock" that predominated at the time.

MRR: How did the band's lineup changes affect the music, if at all?
George: Well, so far (27 years) the only changes have involved drummers. When the original drummer ran away, we gained the services of Tim Wilder. That definitely gave us a more professional and solid sound. Tim was a great drummer. Neil is in love with his drumming! When we re-formed, Neil's brother Paul took over. By the way, the first live gig Paul attended was a Carpettes show, when he was about 14 years old! Paul is a good solid drummer who learns things really quickly. Not as technically great as Tim, but just what we need for our occasional tours/gigs/ recording.

MRR: SEX PISTOLS or THE CLASH?
George: Ahaaaa! If you asked me in 1978, I probably would have said THE CLASH. But hey, I love both. I must admit that the album that gets played the most is *Never Mind the Bollocks*. I never saw The Pistols live, but I saw THE CLASH twice in Newcastle, the first time being dragged backstage,

due to crowd congestion. Two seminal bands...The PISTOLS are the ultimate UK punk band, THE CLASH were a great Rock`n`Roll band.



MRR: What record of yours has been most successful?

George: Successful? Have any been successful? Depends what you mean by success. There have been no million sellers, that's for sure! I suppose the most sought after is "Small Wonder", a minor punk classic, released in a limited edition. Lots of people would like to have an original copy of it. After that, our two best-known songs are probably "Nothing Ever Changes" and "Johnny Won't Hurt You".

MRR: What is the band currently up to?

George: Well, you must understand that, at our advanced age, things tend to slow down. We are just taking things as they come. In 2002, we had our third studio album released by Waveform Records of Japan. In 2003, we had our first live album released by Last Years Youth Records in Germany. Our most recent release (2004) is an EP featuring four tracks we recorded back in 1981. We are cutting down on gigs due to personal commitments, but we have an appearance at an all day punk festival scheduled in August with THE VIBRATORS, UK SUBS, EDDIE & THE HOT RODS and JAYNE COUNTY. There are tentative plans for some new recordings later this year. Watch this space!

MRR: How does the songwriting partnership work in the band?

George: Songwriting partnership? There isn't one! We always did our own thing and even when other band members have contributed things in rehearsals, we always kept the rights to our own songs. That's what Neil wanted 25 years ago and that's how it has remained.

MRR: What do you and the other guys do when you're not Carpetting?

George: Two of us are into crack cocaine, pushing it on the streets of Sunderland. The other is a three times married heroin addict. What do you expect? In reality I am a teacher, Paul is a painter and Neil makes some sort of a living singing and playing his guitar.

MRR: What do you think of the new breed of punk/pop bands?

George: Punk...well yes, I like some of the new records. It's funny. It's been 25 years or so since punk happened, but it's not really a "revival" thing, like Rock'n'Roll was 25 after it first happened in the fifties. It's still relevant! Pop...I hate the manufactured shit we are bombarded with these days. Whatever you think of various bands, it's always better to have people up there playing live, instead of all these backing tapes/miming etc. It's all image. The video has a lot to answer for!

MRR: Will Neil ever tune his guitar properly at live shows?

George: Ouch! Actually, he's very proud of being in tune at all times Jimmy!

MRR: What do you think is the best song you've ever written, and what is your favorite?

George: Crap question and I won`t/can`t answer it. I still like stuff like "Radio Wunderbar", for it's stupid simplicity, but it's not the best. Anyway, for god's sake, who sits and listens to their own records thinking about such things?

MRR: What other well-known bands have you guys played with over the years?

George: ANGELIC UPSTARTS, THE LURKERS, TOM ROBINSON, UK SUBS, 999, ROBERT PALMER, PENETRATION, The VIBRATORS, SHAM 69...

MRR: Who's the biggest cunt you've ever met in the music business?

George: In my experience there are a lot of very "dodgy" and unreliable people involved in all areas of the music business. In my opinion, and I'm sure there are exceptions to this, lead singers tend to be the biggest pains in the arse. That's why I have never played in a band with one.

MRR: Who's the nicest?

George: I've found that the older I get, the nicer the people we play with tend to be. There isn't such a feeling of competition. I find this most when we have played abroad, especially in Japan, where there was a great feeling that everyone was in it together, with all of the bands and fans having the same goal. If you want a "nice" person, well Robert Palmer, who was a big star at the time, put himself out to come and talk to us when we did a TV show with him in Italy. I also remember Paul Jones (Manfred Mann and The Blues Band) doing a similar thing when we did "The Old Grey Whistle Test" on BBC TV.

MRR: How were the bands recent Japanese and Czech tours?

George: Japan was a blast both times. We played to young, knowledgeable audiences out for a good time. The Czech Republic started slow, but built up to a fantastic gig in Ostrava. Not the best town in the world, but a great audience (helped by The Carpettes Polish Fan Club, who traveled to the gig).

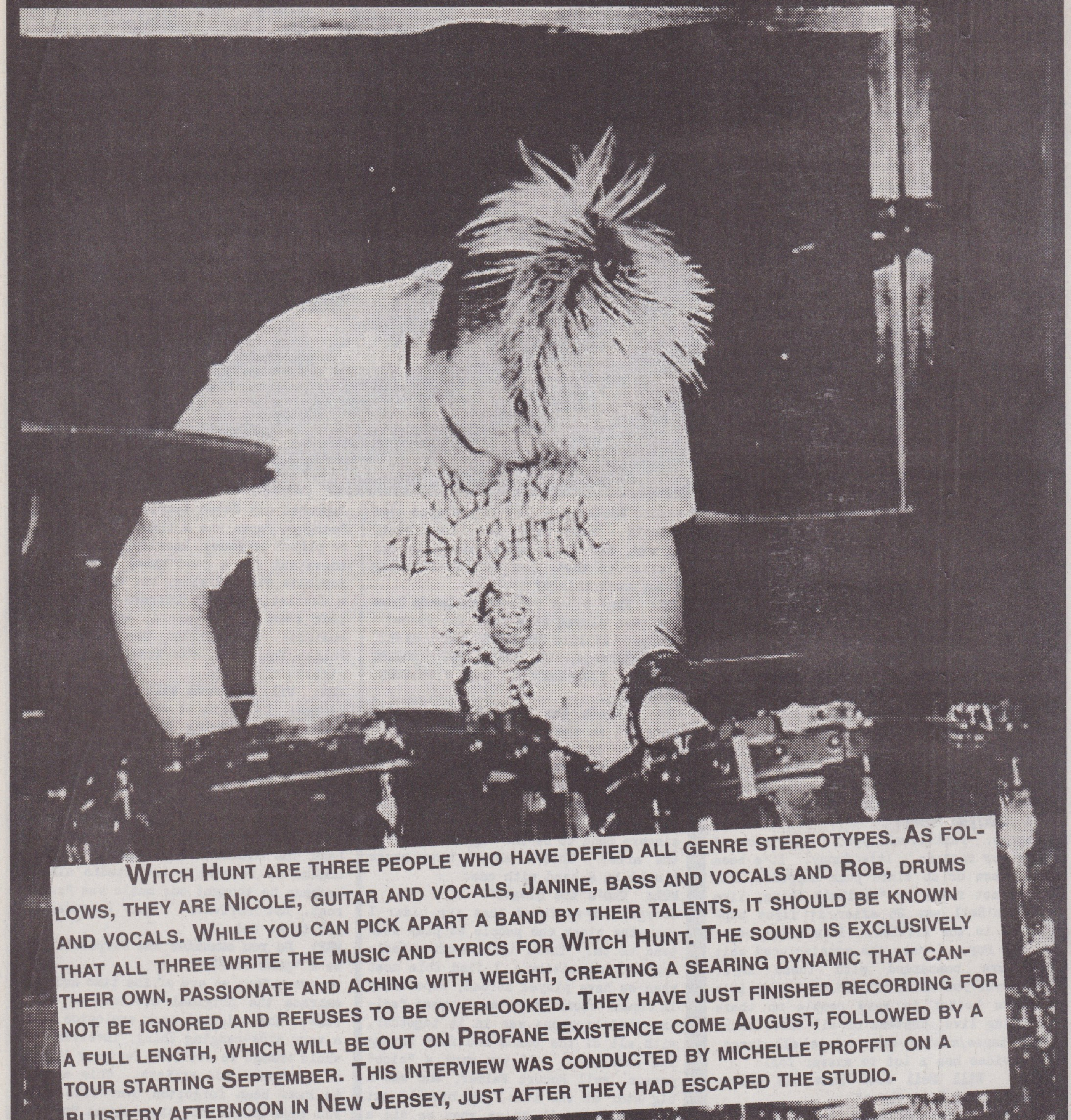
MRR: Will you rock till you drop?

George: I thought it was unseemly when bands were playing over the age of thirty at one time, which makes me a bit of a hypocrite. We have had a good run and I'll keep on doing things if people want us to do them now. The best moment of the last few years was when Hiroshi Otsuki of the Japanese band THE REGISTRATORS offered us the chance to release a new studio album because he thought our music was "current, not revival!" That encourages you to go on!

MRR: Do you consider The Carpettes to be a "punk band"?

George: Yes, we are of the time and we embrace the original attitude of the time. The original punk explosion was a very wide-ranging thing, involving a whole change in attitude for many types of musicians and artists. This seems to have been forgotten over time and you tend to get the stereotyped "punk" image now, of the Mohawk hairdo, tattoos and nose studs, which all came later. The important thing was the attitude and the music, which is still a big influence to a lot of kids today.

WITCH HUNT



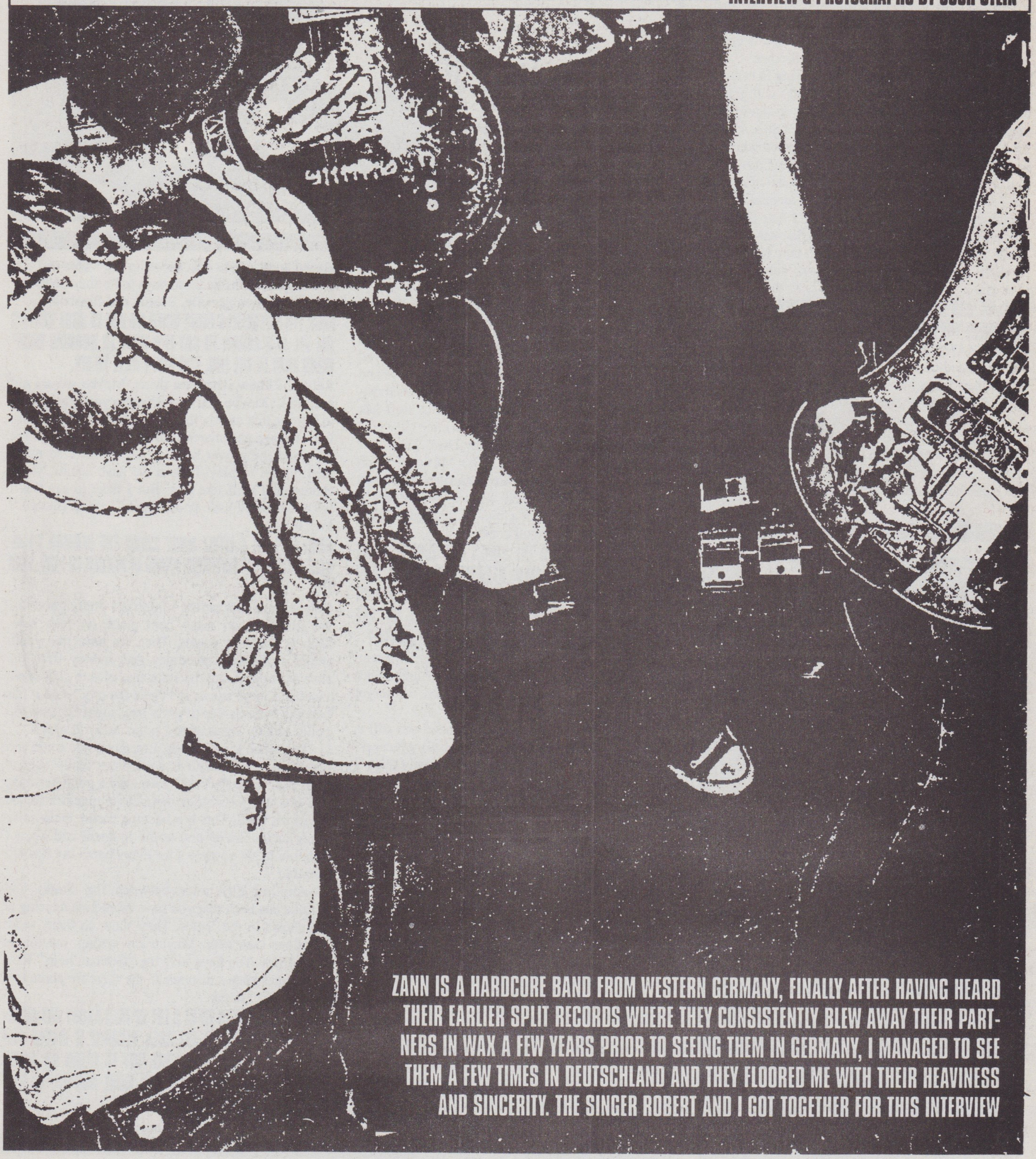
WITCH HUNT ARE THREE PEOPLE WHO HAVE DEFIED ALL GENRE STEREOTYPES. AS FOLLOWS, THEY ARE NICOLE, GUITAR AND VOCALS, JANINE, BASS AND VOCALS AND ROB, DRUMS AND VOCALS. WHILE YOU CAN PICK APART A BAND BY THEIR TALENTS, IT SHOULD BE KNOWN THAT ALL THREE WRITE THE MUSIC AND LYRICS FOR WITCH HUNT. THE SOUND IS EXCLUSIVELY THEIR OWN, PASSIONATE AND ACHING WITH WEIGHT, CREATING A SEARING DYNAMIC THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED AND REFUSES TO BE OVERLOOKED. THEY HAVE JUST FINISHED RECORDING FOR A FULL LENGTH, WHICH WILL BE OUT ON PROFANE EXISTENCE COME AUGUST, FOLLOWED BY A TOUR STARTING SEPTEMBER. THIS INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED BY MICHELLE PROFFIT ON A BLUSTERY AFTERNOON IN NEW JERSEY, JUST AFTER THEY HAD ESCAPED THE STUDIO.

MRR: So how did recording go?
Nicole: Absolute hell. Our cat of sixteen years died the night before. We went to the studio, feeling incredibly depressed, and as we were about to begin my brand new Gibson fell off the guitar stand and the head-stock broke. (laughter) Need I say more?
MRR: Haven't you guys been having a lot of bad luck lately?
Janine: About a month before recording, my car got broken into after a show in Brooklyn and some of our equipment was stolen so yeah, a little bad luck.
MRR: Why did you all wait so long to do a full length?
Rob: Well, when we did the 7"s, I think, like a lot of punk records, we might've recorded a little prematurely. I know for me, I'd only been playing drums for nine months or so. I guess we just wanted to take our time and really develop.
MRR: How did you all meet…well, you two (Nicole and Janine) are related, can people tell that you're twins?
Rob: Um, we're triplets, ok? (laughter) As far as meeting, they're three years older but hardcore punk brought us together. ABC NO RIO…I used to take the bus there every weekend. They started giving me rides and we started hanging out…
MRR: Well, how did you all get into punk?
Janine: The first punk bands Nicole and I listened to were Bikini Kill and Minor Threat. A friend gave us a mix tape and I just remember being like…this is fucking awesome!
Nicole: Yeah…we stopped shaving, even though we're hairless, we found out. And the rest is history…
MRR: And you?
Rob: I always felt a little out of step with my peers. Luckily my cousin Josh saw a little of himself iin me and decided to "enlighten" me. Dead Kennedys, Sex Pistols, the Misfits…. Then I got to see bands like Crudos & Dropdead and I was sold!
MRR: So everyone just bloomed huh. Do you think it takes a certain type of person to be a punk?
Janine: Most punks that I know were outcasts in high school or really angry and depressed about something. You know, dysfunctional family. Nicole and I are really grateful because we have a great family and I've never really been a depressed person. But I definitely am angry and I think there're a lot of fucked up things going on in this world.
Nicole: I disagree. Overall, I am not an angry person. I'm a really optimistic and happy, and I wasn't an outcast in high school and I don't hate my parents, and I don't want to kill people…and I don't know. I just think that the punk scene consists of all different varieties of people.
Janine: Nicole is just optimistic and doesn't know that she really was an outcast in high school. (laughter)
MRR: Well I suppose this sort of goes into your lyric writing. Do you all feel that you write about what is personal first and then political…or do you go into something with the intention of writing politically charged lyrics that at the same time are personal to you?
Rob: Personally I think they're the same thing. I mean to me I'm just writing…from my heart, whatever bothers me in this world…in my immediate environment. I write for myself really, I'm not writing for other people. It's just a release for me…it helps me get through.
MRR: Well. I know Janine and Nicole were just talking about their outlooks and views on life…and the fact that they weren't really depressed, and things of this nature. But I am aware that you were and are, and also…that you just wrote a song about it. Is there anything you'd like to add?
Rob: Honestly, it's such a difficult thing for people to talk about. I think it does bring a lot of people to the scene. But whether they choose to actually talk about it is another story…the mental health subject causes so many debates (pro- and anti-meds, counselors, doctors) that the attitude in our scene often still reflects the attitudes of the world we sought to escape and fight against. There's still such a stigma attached to it and everyone's different but I don't know…I was just kind of reaching out, you know. That's the only time I've ever really written…I mean, it's for myself but it's for other people too. To write about it makes me feel less alone and I hope it can do something for others.
MRR: Well, I think it's a really amazing song….So you all get along in general?
(uncomfortable laughter)
Nicole: I think that with three people it's difficult sometimes. If there's an argument with two people the third person is either the third wheel or just left in the dark…. Being in a band with my twin sister and Janine and Rob being in a relationship… The dynamics between us is really amazing, yet it's just as hard on the other end of the spectrum.
MRR: Well you can always tell. If there's that intense love…what can come along with it is intense hatred or bad feeling. And what are your views on the personal relationships within your band and other bands?
Rob: Big mistake. (laughter) Don't ever play in a band with someone you are in a relation-

ship with.
Nicole: Yeah, being in a band is a relationship in itself. And having little relationships within it just makes things more complex.
Janine: Rob and I were going out for two and half years and as of six months ago, we are no longer together, but we're still best friends and band mates and it's really wonderful at times, but it's also healthy to have some space from each other and we haven't really had the opportunity because of the band.
MRR: What about job-wise? I mean, punk is the only context I ever see you in…what the hell else do you do?
Janine: I'm a social worker in Newark…conducting investigations of abuse and neglect against vulnerable adults. Mainly, I advocate for the elderly, if they are unable to defend themselves in unfortunate situations. It's something I feel very passionate about.
Nicole: because I spend more than forty hours every week at work, it's so important for me to do something that I love. I'm a social worker at a housing program for youth.
Rob: I work in a warehouse. (laughter)
MRR: Do you all think you'll be living in New Jersey for the rest of your lives?
Nicole: No. We'll be moving to Philadelphia after tour.
MRR: Okay. Well, I'm just going to change the subject slightly, cause I want to talk about your shows. I've seen you all a bunch and I know that everyone talks about feminism when they talk about you all. I was just wondering if that's a title that you go by? Do you go by that Rob?
Rob: I'm a full-on supporter of anything that has to do with equality. I'd prefer not to label myself but call me a feminist if you feel the urge!
MRR: Have you ever felt, at shows, or on tour, that you have sort of become this token hardcore band with women in it? Do you feel comfortable, or is there some sort of strange dynamic?
Nicole: Well, I've never told anyone this but when we first started, I was scared people only liked us because there were girls in the band.
Rob: Me too.
Nicole: I think for a while the scene was starved for something different and women playing music is still kind of rare. I guess in a way our gender is an advantage, although sometimes we do get stupid comments from people. Once a guy asked me if I needed help tuning my guitar.
MRR: I know you all get pegged as anarcha-feminist or riot girl crust, etcetera. And that these labels are laughed off a bit. But…I just want to ask Rob, do you feel you relate to this at all, as far as being the only male in the band…and being described as such.
Rob: Well I think we all definitely laugh off those silly, sub-genres. But occasionally it'll get to me. I know I do a lot in this band. Sometimes it sucks to not get credit. But obviously there's more focus on them.
MRR: How do you all feel about the scene that you're involved in? Do you think that the punk/hardcore world is perfect? Is there work that needs to be done?
Janine: God no. It's far from perfect.
Rob: I don't know. I mean, it's definitely not preaching to the converted, even though that phrase has been thrown around again lately.
Janine: I think a lot of people feel like everyone in the scene is enlightened and educated. That we're all anti-sexist and anti-homophobic…but the fact of the matter is that there are plenty of people in the scene that are fucking sexist, who blatantly discriminate against other people…
Rob: People that don't even know it. It's ingrained in their heads…
Nicole: Because we all have lives outside from the punk scene, things from our "normal" lives tend to bleed in. I guess I shouldn't say bleed, like it's a bad thing, but so many punks want to be politically correct. Just because we want to be, it doesn't mean that we all can be. And the punk scene isn't—all around—this utopia where everyone is perfect. We as a community need to face reality and realize that we all have things that we're not proud of.
MRR: Since punk is supposed to be about anti-American values and such…do you feel that it's just natural, or that it's been ingrained in all these people?
Nicole: Absolutely. I mean how old is your average punk? Sixteen, seventeen and has been a punk for three years or so. Think about it. Even a thirty year old who has been a punk for 15 years was not punk for half of their life. So of course naturally we are all ingrained with American values.
MRR: Okay…well, I just wanted to ask why you all decided to play music. Was it a natural thing? How did it happen?
Janine: For me, I wanted to play music because women were completely absent from punk/hardcore shows for so many years. I was going to shows for like six years and I was like well…if all these guys can do it, I can do it too. So it just made me want to contribute more to the scene. And it's also a way for me to release all of the anger and frustration building up inside...I also love playing bass and I love music. So definitely for me, the fact that I am a woman and I couldn't play, just made me want to play more. To prove that I'm just as good as you are and I'm just as capable.
Rob: I don't know. I play this music because honestly, it's the only thing that makes me feel alive. Makes me feel like I'm worth something. It's the only thing that really speaks to me and I don't know where I'd be without it. It's done so much for me, and to become a part of that, is just so important to me.
Janine: Having Rob in the band is amazing. Because me and Nicole searched long and hard and then finally found him…and he's like the most amazing musician.
Nicole: And songwriter.
Janine: Songwriter and person. So to have him in this band…he is worth so much. So much and he doesn't even know it. We would not be us without him. (everyone is crying)
MRR: Do you think that there are a lot more women involved in hardcore now than there were when you started?
Janine: Absolutely.
Rob: Lately it seems like almost every show we've played has had other bands with women.
Nicole: Yeah, it happens unintentionally all the time where a show has all bands with women. It's awesome.
Janine: I, myself, am very supportive of women bands. And they are not just shitty punk bands with women playing the instruments. Without being biased, there are so many incredible bands with women around right now. It's amazing.
MRR: I know you all hate the "what do you think you sound like question"…so I just wanted to ask…what music did you all listen to today? Just to give someone an idea of what kind of music you actually like.
Nicole: The Signal Lost LP, Post Regiment, Kylesa.
Rob: I listened to Motorhead this morning on my way to work. The Canadian Subhumans. An old Copout tape…
Janine: um, Poison Idea.
Rob: Neurosis.
Nicole: Zounds.
Janine: I also really love so many bands that are around right now… Syzlak, Harum Scarum, Hiretsukan, Aphasia.
Rob: She just wanted to know about music we were listening to today.
Janine: I am listening to them. Oh…you mean today, today.
MRR: Yeah. Whenever.
Janine: Oh…Witch Hunt all day. (laughter).
MRR: Okay…do you have any last words?
Rob: Thank you.
MRR: What's your address…so people can write to you.
Janine: 72 Brian rd. West Caldwell. New Jersey. 07006.

ZANN

INTERVIEW & PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOSH STEIN



ZANN IS A HARDCORE BAND FROM WESTERN GERMANY, FINALLY AFTER HAVING HEARD THEIR EARLIER SPLIT RECORDS WHERE THEY CONSISTENTLY BLEW AWAY THEIR PARTNERS IN WAX A FEW YEARS PRIOR TO SEEING THEM IN GERMANY, I MANAGED TO SEE THEM A FEW TIMES IN DEUTSCHLAND AND THEY FLOORED ME WITH THEIR HEAVINESS AND SINCERITY. THE SINGER ROBERT AND I GOT TOGETHER FOR THIS INTERVIEW

MRR: WHO ALL IS IN ZANN AND WHAT DO YOU DO?

Robert: We are five persons. It's John —Guitar, Mark—Drums, Robert (me)—vocals, Ron—Guitar and Uwe—Bass. Like I said, I'll do my best to give this band my voice. Tonight it's just me answering questions.

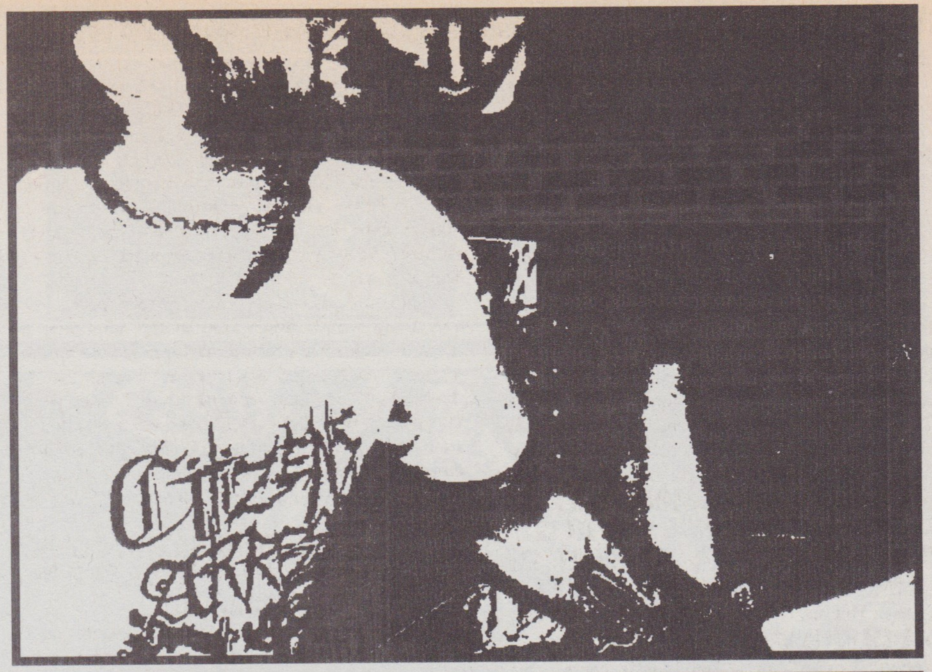
MRR: BESIDES BEING IN A BAND, WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU AND THE OTHERS INVOLVED IN?

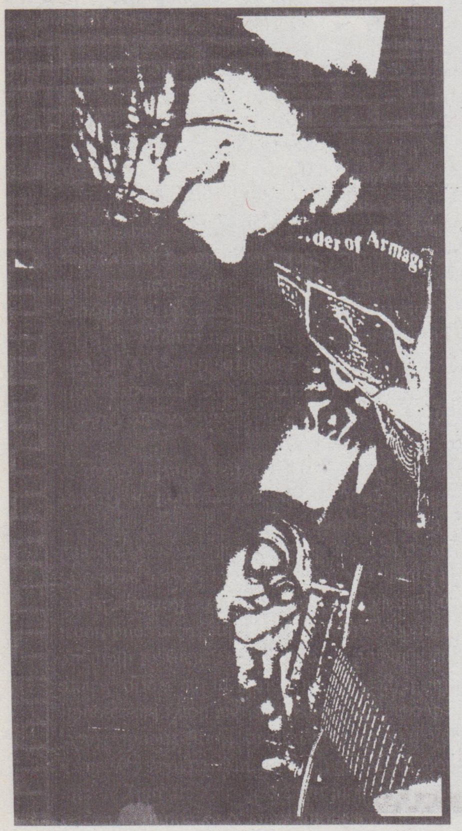
Robert: Uwe is going to university to study geography. He will be done this year if everything works out. Ron is doing some kind of university thing as well and will also graduate this year. He is doing something with building material. Stuff like that. John finished university a while ago with geophysics. He works now in a copy shop and is doing is "Flossbros" Pin "factory" with his brother.

Mark is going to school and I'm trying to become a teacher for the first grade. I hopefully will graduate in a year. Besides all this shit I set up shows in a squat here in my town. It's called the ZORO. Also, I have this small record label and mail order, which is named after my first radio ADAGIO830. From time to time I set up tours for friends' bands and of course for ZANN. We prefer to do as much as possible by ourselves or with the help of friends. I hate booking agencies and all this pseudo-professional stuff. I mean, punk bands have become too lazy to do stuff on their own. But whatever, this was not the question. Ha.

MRR: OK, CAN YOU GIVE ME A SHORT HISTORY OF THE BAND AND WHERE YOU CAME UP WITH THE NAME ZANN?

Robert: ZANN formed in late 1999 as a four piece. After some shows John joined us on second guitar. Since then there have been no line-up changes. I knew Ron since we went to some shows together. I lived nearby, and after he moved to Jena he introduced me to Mark and Uwe. They asked him if he wanted to do a band with them and he asked me if I wanted to do vocals after he saw me singing for a bad band in my hometown. He had some good memories of that. Hahaha. So, they got me.





Over the years we have been lucky enough to play lots of shows, doing some tours in Europe and one in the U.S., and put out some records on vinyl that have been re-released on CD by Geek Scene and PerKoro records. I'm really glad that we've stayed together now for over four years with all the love and hate we have for each other. In the end we are mostly all on the same level when it comes to stuff like why we do the band, politics, and so on.

The name was an idea from Uwe. ZANN is derived from the short story "The Music of Erich Zann" by H.P. Lovecraft, which describes the reason we make music pretty well. So we thought that it might be a good name for a band of this style. That's it and I hope the story will continue.

MRR: SO YOU'VE TOURED THE STATES AND EUROPE. WHAT DIFFERENCES DO YOU FIND BETWEEN EUROPEAN AND AMERICAN TOURING? MOST PEOPLE SEEM TO SAY TOURING EUROPE IS LUXURIOUS IN COMPARISON TO THE US. ARE THERE ANY DOWNSIDES FROM AN INSIDER SUCH AS YOU?

Robert: I think there are many things different. Maybe we are a little bit spoiled here in Europe with all the things we have, and sometimes we forget about all that.

The main difference for me has been and still is the food and the drinks (which you mostly get everywhere in Europe). In the States we got food I think 3 times in 3 weeks or so. I mean they treat you nice and you always know the kid that is doing the show here in Europe. They take care of you!

In the States, sometimes we didn't know the promoter at all. We got money from some kid and left or got a place to stay. But I have to say that we had heard so many stories about touring in the States and how hard it is, so we had no much expectations. We all were just so excited to go there! It has been a blast for us to play so far away from home (thanks so much to BLAME GAME—they did such a great job). I mean, that is one of the reasons why we have the band. We want to play as much as possible and everywhere we can play.

Another strange thing in the States was that bands mostly never wanted to share the backline with us, and even we asked them why they never had a good answer. It was sometimes so stupid to have five drum kits ~~in a small basement~~!

But in all it was much better then we thought. We played some of our best shows in the States and met lots of great kids like these guys in Portland, ME and the kids in Summerville, Boston and Pittsburgh.

MRR: ITS DIFFERENT I THINK WHEN NO ONE IS JUST RENTING THE KIT, IT'S EASIER TO SAY IT'S COOL TO BORROW SOMETHING THAT IN THE END, YOU DON'T HAVE TO FIX.

Robert: I know what you mean. Maybe we are not used to it. Maybe you saw it where you played here in Europe that mostly the touring band puts the backline on stage and shares with the other bands. I think the good thing over here is that we have so many possibilities to play. I mean we have squats, youth centers and stuff like that. But I have to say that I wish we would have house shows here in Europe. I love them!

MRR: EXPLAIN A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE GERMAN HARDCORE SCENE, THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF PLACES TO PLAY, KIDS ETC.

Robert: As I said before I think it's pretty good that we still have so many cool places to play here. Leipzig has four squats. Then we have this youth center stuff that sometimes gets money from the state as support, but the state also tries to shut down more and more squats to "clean the city." And it has become even harder to get a new squat because the police mostly come after 2 hours or so. It sucks.

The scene is good here. I mean people come and go. Even if the scene is sometimes really split (I think that is everywhere?!) we have a good network, and it's still possible to get a tour together for an unknown band. This has become harder because so many bands are around at the moment and it's not possible to set up shows for every band, but it's still possible.

Another difference between the States and Europe has been that you have more kids dancing at the shows in the States. They show so many more emotions then here. Maybe I'm wrong, but this is what I saw. You have here the "German hole." Kids sometimes keep a distance to the stage for about two meters. Tsk tsk tsk.

MRR: THERE SEEMED TO BE A LOT OF TALK ABOUT NOT WANTING THE OLYMPICS IN THE AREA BECAUSE IT WOULD ADD EVEN MORE PRESSURE FOR THE CITY TO CLEAN UP, WHICH WOULD END UP SHUTTING DOWN MORE SQUATS, IS THAT RIGHT?

Robert: Yep, but finally we didn't got them. Hahaha! The city was supposed to waste so much money for so much crap. There were different actions from the city to clean up our area. The Conne Island (an independent club here in my neighborhood) had lots of problem with the city and especially with the financial department, but we got 2000 kids on the streets to demonstrate and we won!

MRR: SCORE ONE FOR THE PUNX!

Robert: I think there will come more and more attacks from the city and the state to make it harder for the squats or independent youth centers. Like, we got this camera 200 meters away from my house. Now I feel "safe." It's so scary! We get observed more and more. The UK is a good example of that. They have cameras everywhere! So I think we've learned pretty well from your national security system

MRR: YEAH I SUPPOSE THE US IS A GREAT EXAMPLE FOR THAT UNFORTUNATELY. IT SEEMED THAT IN SOME PUNK CIRCLES THERE WAS A "PRO-ISRAEL" MOVEMENT IN GERMANY, GRAFFITI IN THE SQUATS, ETC. HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

Robert: You mean the "anti-German" movement?

MRR: ARE THEY DIFFERENT?

Robert: I mean I'm pro Israel too, because I think that it is really important that this state exists, but I don't like the way of their politics and I don't like the way of the Palestinians either.

MRR: WHAT IS THE "ANTI-GERMAN" MOVEMENT THEN?

Robert: The problem for me with the anti-Germans is that they support Israel without any critical views. They mostly support the government 100% in any action, which I can't. Another strange thing for me is that they are pro-America because the USA supports Israel. It's so black and white. You know what I mean?! It's really hard to explain in English for me.

Another problem is that this whole movement split up the left-wing scene into two big groups and even into tons of smaller groups. There are so many discussions going on about this, and it is just talking and no action. Also, all of these strange things happened, like some "anti-Germans" going to an anti-Bush demo with American flags to show their support for the States. Fights started between the people that are fighting mostly on the same side.

It's so sad, sometimes it seems that any kids don't care about the fascist problem anymore at all. They are just focused on this pro-Israel thing. I mean, they call you fascist if you are not with them and don't support Israel at all. I think you have to separate between the state and the government. I can't support the government with their actions, which doesn't mean that I'm anti-Jewish. You know what I mean? Like, I see people wearing "Israel Defense Force" shirts who try to beat you up cause you are not with them opinion-wise. What's going on here? Wearing a shirt that is supporting an army. That is so sad.

I think this is a complex issue, and it's hard to get everything written down here in this interview. I mean, even for me (and I think for all in the band) it's really hard to find a point of view about that. I think we all don't know enough. I hate it when people go on thinking in just black and white and don't want to discuss things, or accept other opinions and think about what other people have to say. Like I said in the beginning I can't support Palestine or Israel at all.

MRR: YEAH, THE LEFT MAY BE SPLIT HERE IN THE STATES BUT I THINK AT THE SAME TIME YOU'D BE HARD PRESSED TO FIND ANY OF US SUPPORTING BUSH AT A DEMO.

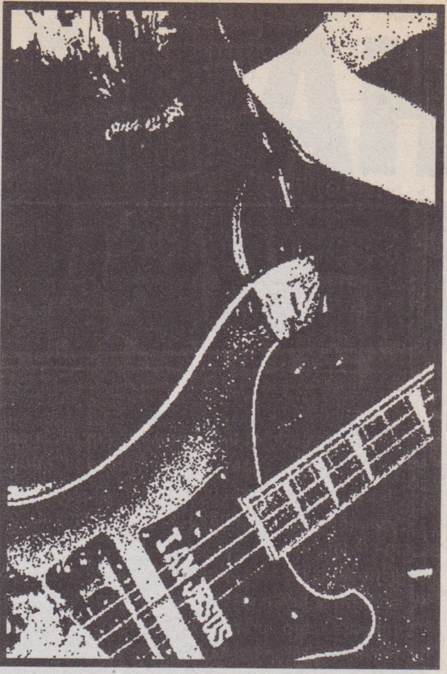
Robert: Sometimes its really scary. That is so strange for me too. I can't support Bush and his way of politics as a left wing punk rock kid, and I can't support Bush just because he supports Israel. This doesn't mean that it is not important to support the country Israel.

MRR: BUT THERE ARE MULTIPLE IMAGES FLOATING AROUND THAT SHOW GEORGE W BUSH WEARING A ZANN SHIRT! CARE TO ELABORATE ON THAT?

Robert: We did this pin as a sarcastic statement just to confuse people. I saw an "anti-German" wearing this pin just because it has GWB on it, which was so funny. I mean, they are wearing pins with the American flag and a ZANN pin too. I like it if people don't know what they should think about you. I like to play with images and let people start thinking about things or start talking to you. I think John did some nice ones.

MRR: I HAD A QUESTION ABOUT ONE OF YOUR SONGS. "AUSWEITUNG DER KAMPFZONE" TALKS ABOUT THE "NEW ECONOMY ROCKERS;" TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT.

Robert: The "new economy rockers"—haha. My friend Benni formed this. In the last few years more and more bands have come out with the punk rock image to get big, and there have been kids that just joined the club cause they liked the fashion. They are not interested in the whole thing at all. There are so many bands around at the moment that are using this strong DIY network just to play shows and hope that some indy boss finds them somewhere when they play. I mean, it's so much easier to get a show as a "punk rock" band.



I saw it when I talked to this guy at work, who is playing in a crossover band. They have been around now for four years and just play the small towns in our area but have four-color posters, bags, and all that shit. And he sees how it works for us with all the tours and stuff, and he asks me about it. How cool that is and so on. He doesn't care about anything else, like what is behind it and how this scene works. He always thinks that we're making lots of money. He doesn't understand that money doesn't play the main part. He can't understand how you can play outside of Germany without a big promotion agency and stuff like that. Bands use this scene to get big and they kick your ass, sending you shitty contracts and wanting guarantees for playing. That sucks. But money always changes your mind—hahaha

MRR: WHAT *DOES* PLAY THE MAIN PART FOR YOU, AND WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS FOR THE BAND?

Robert: The main part for us is to play as many shows as we can. Playing live is the best thing for us. Being on the road and meeting new awesome people and bands. Maybe that sounds pathetic?! But touring is still the best, because we never thought that we would ever do stuff like this. Then we bought a van and just started. And I'm still excited about every tour we do. I mean there are people outside that invest their time to set up a show for you, cook you food and stuff. That is always so amazing. I love this energy. I don't know if I ever would meet so many people or be able to travel in so many countries without the band. Future plans? New songs, maybe an LP and another tour. Getting in the van.

MRR: OK, ANY FINAL COMMENTS?

Robert: Thanx so much for the interview!!! I hope I had something to say that has been interesting. Sorry for my bad English and that I was alone. It's because the rest of my band is one and half hours away from here. So this is just my point of view. For any questions get in touch zann@adagio830.de or check out http://www.adagio830.de

HAYMARKET RIOT

When I found out I'd be reviewing Haymarket Riot's latest release, *Mog*, I was ecstatic. It's not every day that the amateur music critic gets to write about music she can actually stand, let alone think is really bitchin'. It's been almost three years since the Chicago's sensation of a quartet blasted onto the scene with *Bloodshot Eyes*, so the standards to which I anticipated *Mog* to hold up were, needless to say, pretty lofty. And for a band that's been through countless ordeals in the forms of broken bones, semi-dismemberment, and countless lineup changes, Haymarket Riot has done one hell of a job putting out a polished record with little to criticize.

Take a song like "My Donuts, God Damn!" The title alone should kick you off your ass to the nearest record store. Who knows what Kevin, Fred, Chris, and Shane were thinking when they came up with It or the mention of "spicy red sauce," but it's a stroke of sheer brilliance. And you'd anticipate some nastv Me First and the Gimme Gimme's cardboard cut-out replica reading the track list, but you gotta hear the album's roaring riffs and avant-garde melodic lines to know that this is not a band you'll want to miss next time they come around. Unconventional and unpredictable, boasting some charming quirks and idiosyncrasies, Haymarket Riot's releases bomb your ears with powerhouse drumming and semi-dissonant harmonies that somehow turn resonant. Songs like "Plastic Bottle Kid" evoke the memory of their own previous album, not some other dudes that haven't put something out in a decade. That's when you know you've experienced the music of a quality band: when they sound not like a newer version of something that's already happened, but a newer version of themselves. Haymarket Riot has put forth a record for their generation—a densely compacted collection of gushing guitars and drums underscored by whimsical poetry that just dodges sarcasm. Perhaps I'm just getting gushy as well, but hey—last time I got this excited was when *Bloodshot Eyes* came out. Ladies and gentlemen, enjoy. Interview by Katia Sobolski. Photos by Andrew Ballantyne.

MRR: Who the hell are you!? What the hell do you do!?

Kevin: I'm Kevin. I play guitar and sing for Haymarket Riot.

MRR: Tell me a little about the production of *Mog*.

Kevin: We did a lot of recordings before going into studio. We wanted to take a different approach on *Mog* than we did on *Bloodshot Eyes*; just putting it down, getting it done, unlike the microscoping we did on *Bloodshot*. We didn't worry about all the details as much this time around.

MRR: One of the first things I noticed about *Mog* was the production. I saw a lot of parallels between the two albums, melodically and lyrically, but *Mog* is far more refined mechanically. I'd definitely say that this—the production—is what sets the albums apart.

Kevin: Yeah, and I think a large part of that might be the studio and engineer. Steve [*Albini*] is probably one of the top engineers in the world. And that's no knock against Dale, cause he did an amazing job with *Bloodshot Eyes* and our EPs before that. But Steve's good at what he does and made the session efficient. In the end, we just went in there and played our guitars, drums, bass, sang our vocals. We did the whole album in one cut, so the music is all live, vocals were put over the music later.

MRR: So you didn't use any overdubs.

Kevin: Yeah, it's amazing. We're quite meticulous about our equipment. Before we started recording, we made sure all of our equipment was in solid condition so we wouldn't have to substitute broke-down equipment in the middle of recording. The guitars are big, the bass is big, the drums are big; there was no need for guitar overdubs, and that's what we were trying to achieve—a no-frills, no-bullshit rock record.

MRR: You guys have had some lineup changes since *Bloodshot Eyes* (2001). Your drummer and bass player are new, right?

Kevin: Guitar player.

MRR: Guitar player, right. So your band's instability has clearly and understandably made it difficult to create and produce since *Bloodshot*. How did you handle the stress as far as your music goes?

Kevin: Well, a lot happened. First of all, we went through a period when our line-up kept changing and changing…

MRR: Yeah, I remember that [*laughing*].

Kevin: [*laughing*]…and then I was in an accident right after we came home from the *Bloodshot Eyes* tour. I got hit by a car door on my bicycle and shattered my right hand. I had two surgeries for it: one to put my hand back together, and the other to remove the screws that were holding it together, and then I had to go through months of physical therapy. Then, our drummer quit at the same time, and our guitar player, a month after that. Basically, the future of Haymarket Riot wasn't looking too good.

MRR: So how many lineups did you go through after that?

Kevin: Well, we brought Shane in on drums and for a while we were just a three-piece, but we later brought in another guitar player, Quinn, who lasted for about four months, and we replaced him with Michael, who lasted about six months, and then we brought in Chris Daly. And that's where we're at right now.

MRR: Whew! That's quite a list. But Haymarket's done a phenomenal job of pulling through after that. Many bands would have gone way south after such a volatile period, but you went ahead and put out a quality rock'n'roll record. Would you perhaps even say this experience motivated you?

Kevin: It made us resilient, that's for sure. We've been together for almost five years now, and we've made it so far. It's been a difficult year, though. Chris was only with us for four months when we started recording, so he was basically cramming for a final exam. But it's definitely made us more tight-knit, and it's taught us to take things with a grain of salt. But whatever comes next, just bring it on!

MRR: Yeah, your lyrics have that grain of salt. I was talking to Zak [*Einstein*] the other day, and we both agreed that a large part of what makes your music *your* music is the lyrics. I mean, talk about tongue-in-cheek! I love it!

Kevin: First of all, thanks for the compliment on the lyrics. That's always something reviewers are pretty fifty-fifty on.

MRR: Well, your lyrics definitely appeal to a certain personality type. And those of us that enjoy and appreciate the kind of music you play would tend also to enjoy and appreciate your lyrics.

Kevin: Yeah, yeah. Thanks a lot. I usually put music down first and worry about the lyrics after that's done. We all collaborate on subject matter and try to match words and music so they fit. And clearly, the lyrics reflect on the turmoil we've gone through. It's a natural thing, really. Be it in writing, painting, making music, turmoil in everyday life, work, family, tends to move creativity along. Difficult times impact creation, always.

MRR: When *Bloodshot Eyes* came out, everyone started comparing you guys to Fugazi. It was half complimentary and half derogatory. How do you take that?

Kevin: It doesn't bother us in the least. People need to refer new things to old things. And if they want to refer to Fugazi when they hear us, that's awesome. Personally, I could pick out obvious differences between Fugazi and us, but I can also see how other people would only pick out similarities. And that's normal for someone that doesn't live with and think about our music every day like we do. But, frankly, I'd much rather be compared to a band like Fugazi than some band I don't like. So I do take it as a compliment. But we get compared to a bunch of bands I would never think of. Someone even compared us to Weezer. I don't really see that, but hey, I like Weezer, so that's cool.

MRR: Let's talk about your recent European tour.

Kevin: We did one about a year ago following the European release of *Bloodshot Eyes*. I really, really enjoyed it. The shows in Europe are definitely a different experience. For us, it's easier to play a show in Europe than it is in the U.S. I think that has a lot to do with how Europeans treat bands. They're generally more receptive to foreign bands. I think it has a lot to do with the availability of music. I mean, here, you can decide to see a rock show any given night and do exactly that, but shows just aren't that frequent over there.

MRR: It's natural. Rock'n'roll is American.

Kevin: Exactly. We definitely like going to Europe. We've done two European tours so far and they've both been great.

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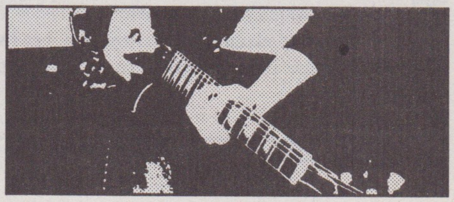

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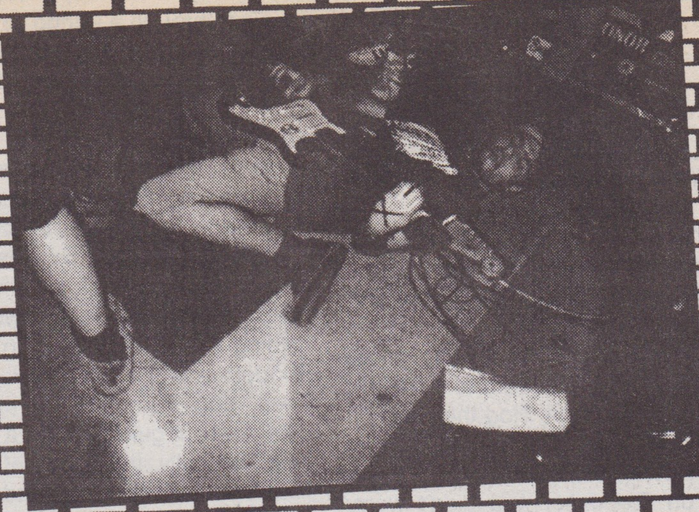

Interview by Daniel of Schandmaul Records

MRR: Hi folks, how is it going?

Branimir: Hello *MRR* readers! My name is Branimir, but lots of people know me as xGajox, which is my nickname. I'm the very new drummer of FxPxOx—they asked me just few days ago if I wanted to join the band. Even though I live in Croatia and will have to travel a lot for rehearsals I said yes, because they're great guys and an awesome band!!!

Vasko: Hi to all HC kids everywhere in the world. Beside us, Rade (bass) and Tripe (guitar) also play in FxPxOx, but Branimir and me are the ones who are going to answer in this interview.

MRR: Macedonia is a very small country, with about 2 million people. Tell us about what is going on there concerning the punk and hardcore scene.

Vasko: Yes, we're a really small country that has actually only been independent for 13 years. That happened after the break-up of Yugoslavia, which besides Macedonia consisted of Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia, Bosnia, Monte Negro, Kosovo, and Vojvodina. The hardcore scene here is rather small as well. Basically, there are a handful of people who really understand and practice the DIY culture, whereas the others are in the scene just for the fun and the need of belonging somewhere. But it's not all that bad because each day there are quite a few kids who join the scene with all their hearts. I would mention the following bands: Choice Of My Own (fast/thrash/youth crew, xxxtripexxx@yahoo.com), Out Of Time (mix of 90s European youth crew and SOIA), Speak Our Minds (fast/noise mayhem, dzano_x_positive@yahoo.com), Losi Deca (anti-fascist working class street punk, losideca@freemail.com.mk), Bill Skins Fifth (dark and intelligent metal/HC), X Kat (it's the FxPxOx guys playing emotive post-HC), Brain Ghetto (anarcho-punk, brain_ghetto@mail.ru), BbezK (it's me and Rade with our friends playing male/female-fronted anarcho-punk between Crass, Nausea, and Naked Aggression), Fragment (melodic HC sidewalk@freemail.com.mk), distribution/zine *Fuck Yoga* (neveranswerthephone@hotmail.com), *Progress* zine (dragmlad@hotmail.com), *Majkata Zemja Se Smee* zine (tinica_83@yahoo.com), *Subverzija* zine (brain_ghetto@mail.ru), Plostad Sloboda, anarchist books publishing house (praz@freemail.com.mk), GAMA (Anti war group) and Peace Action (group for objection of conciseness) as well as the Napravi Sam/a collective, in which our band takes part too. It is a collective that has been promoting the DIY culture in Macedonia for several years with organizing shows, putting out music, making zines, debates, protests, Food Not Bombs.

I have a radio show (www.kanal103.com.mk/emisii/kratkoijasno.htm) where DIY culture is promoted and the show is of international character. I also run the *1,2,3...?!?!* zine, so feel free to contact me.

Among all these things I've listed there are a few other bands and zines which are somewhere in between the underground and the will to claim bigger affirmation, but I will not mention them because after all, here we're talking about 100% DIY way of life.

It's a fact that the HC scene here is poorly organized and there are no squats or clubs where we could develops our activities. I think that is due to the fact that most of the people leave the scene after they finish school and get a job. It's also inevitable that the lousy financial situation in the country where we live affects the bad condition of our scene, but we manage to keep the scene alive even in spite of these handicaps. All of the bands and activists that visited Macedonia have had a good time here.

Branimir: Since I'm from Croatia I can tell you something about scene there. Unfortunately the scene is not great here lately. We had a way better scene in the last 10 years but now lots of people dropped out, bands are breaking up too soon, very few people are reading zines, and worst thing that happened here in Zagreb where I live is closing of Club Attack, which was our great and only venue for DIY HC/punk gigs. The city closed the club in last December, but what's good here are that we have lots of great bands, zines and we have lots of cool DIY labels/distributions that are definitely better than before. Ok, I'll recommend you some cool bands: Senata Fox (fast Hardcore), Protest Mozga (thrash HC/punk), Panaceja (very fast thrash HC), AK 47 (crust/metal HC/punk), Lasting Values (fast youth crew/thrash), Theysuck! (early 80s HC/punk), Amok (modern mosh/metal HC), Dislike (crust/grind), Fightback (crust HC/punk), Los Primjer (melodic heavy HC/punk), Faak Am See (crust HC/punk), Debeli Precjednik (melodic HC/punk), Analena (post-HC/emo) and more great bands. All of these bands have something released, so check 'em out! Zines that are written in English are: *Fecal Forces* (crust/grind zine with lots of occult & pagan stuff, ten issues, new issue soon), *La_Bean* (cool "scene" zine with lots of stuff in it, eight issues, new issue soon), *International Old School Conspiracy* (half-written in English & half written in Croatian, "scene" zine with lots of stuff about 80s hardcore, two issues so far), *You & Me* (stuff about sex taboo themes, some anarcho stuff, some scene stuff, four issues so far). Other zines are also good but are written in Croatian. If you want to know more about Croatian HC/punk scene you can write me at my email: gajoimasa@yahoo.com or you can check out my scene report on www.rippingthrash.com

MRR: You have been touring Europe in August 2003. This tour was connected with a lot of troubles concerning your visa to enter the European Union. How did you manage to sneak into the well-protected fortress of Europe?

Vasko: Macedonia is actually a big cage. We have a very limited freedom of movement due to the fact that we need visas for almost all the countries in the world. Even if you get a visa for, let's say, England, you have to come back in a given period of time to the embassy that has issued you the visa. That is very degrading for us, but that's our reality. Getting our visas for entrance in the European Union was a product of pure luck, hard work and a huge desire of exchanging experiences and positive energy with people from the Western European HC scene. We had the luck to meet this crazy and positive French guy who was working in the French embassy in Skopje and that person helped us a lot. We/he even managed to use some false documents as well. We were also

given generous help by our friends from Croatia, Germany, France, Basque, and the Netherlands; they have our eternal thanks. Our tour was a real proof of the international cooperation in the HC scene, as well as a proof for the people in Macedonia, who think that you can't leave the country because of the strict visa system, that it's not exactly like that. Many of the kids who were at our shows in Europe heard us for the first time, things have changed for the better after the tour though, and more people are starting to get interested in us. We've already gotten a few offers for shows in USA, and even though we know it's very hard for us to get an American visa, we started preparing for something that if we have luck, will happen in the summer of 2005. So, if you can help us anyhow with our USA tour, please contact us!

MRR: Regarding the small but growing scene in Macedonia did you take any important impressions back to Skopje to improve the development of your local scene?

Vasko: It is inevitable that the way the scene in Western Europe is organized has influenced us, but there is a huge difference between our regions meaning that we can't line up certain things the way they are lined up over there. You know, it's not all that easy to devote yourself fully to the scene when you can't cover the basic existential needs. The people in Western Europe have more choices and better conditions, so we end up only with the enthusiasm, but isn't it all that we need for HC after all?

MRR: In March this year the conflict in Kosovo was again in the media when Albanian nationalists attacked the Serbian minority and more than 30 people got killed during the fights. Kosovo is just about 50 km from Skopje and there are a lot of Albanians living in Macedonia as well. What are the effects of the ongoing Kosovo conflict on Macedonia and what does it mean to you?

Vasko: It's not that easy to answer this question because the reasons for these conflicts are very old. Kosovo is about 15 km from Skopje, and in Macedonia live about 20% Albanians (Macedonia has 2.1 million citizens). Basically, we can see the conflict with Kosovo from several points of view: economical, religious, and cultural. Kosovo used to be a part of Serbia, which is a country where the majority of the people are Orthodox Christians. The Albanians are Muslims and they have gained majority in Kosovo in the last 100 years. Kosovo has an important role in the history of Serbia, and now there are barely several thousand Serbs, so you can imagine their frustration. It's a fact that while Milosevic was in charge, the Albanians were molested by the Serbian police, they're not much better now, I can say that now they're even more cruel because what they did was ethnic cleansing of Kosovo, where among Serbians, the Roma people and some other smaller ethnical groups suffered a great loss. Basically, the Albanian nationalists want to make a big Albanian state on the Balkans, where to the already existing country of Albania, they would attach Kosovo and other parts from Greece, Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro. In order to make their idea come true, they have chosen the worst way, with war, which in 2001 involved Macedonia as well. After that our country basically has been divided in two parts, Macedonian and Albanian.

MRR: One group that people often forget about are the Roma. While the official media was only mentioning attacks on Serbians there are also a lot of Roma who became victims of violence. In Macedonia there are a few thousand Roma living including at least 3000 Roma refugees from Kosovo. What can you tell us about their living conditions?

Vasko: I'll tell you a fact that might surprise you. Macedonia is the only country that has acknowledged the Roma people as a nation (throughout the world they are only an ethnical group) and calls them Roms (throughout the world they are referred to as Gypsies). I live in a district where lots of Roma people live and I have many Roma friends. Rade, our bassist, works in an organization that educates the Roma kids that don't have conditions for education. In Skopje is situated the largest Roma district in the world, where tens of thousands of Roms live. Their living standard is very low and many of them are uneducated, but the last few years there is a tendency toward improving these conditions: the Roms now have their political parties, newspapers, TV channels. The Roma refugees that were seeking salvation in the European Union, in Greece to be more exact, were brutally beaten by the police and weren't allowed to enter the EU. That serves as a brutal example of the hypocritical politics of the fortress Europe.

MRR: Continuing with the regional political conflicts the government of Greece has a bit of a problem accepting the name "Macedonia." What does it mean to them?

Vasko: The Greeks have a problem with Macedonia because they think we are Greeks. Basically, all the governments of our neighbour countries have problems with Macedonia because the Bulgarians think we're Bulgarians, the Serbs think we're Serbs and the Albanians want to take half of Macedonia and attach it to their country. In 1912, Macedonia was divided between these four countries and in 1944 liberated from slavery, becoming a republic as a part of Yugoslavia. With Yugoslavia falling apart in 1991, Macedonia became an independent country. Then the Greeks have closed the borders, put an embargo on us and asked us to change the name of Macedonia. I can't really understand their attitude. We are coming from completely different groups of nations, but I think that they're pissed off because of Alexander, who was Macedonian, won the Greek kingdom several centuries BC. Until then the Greeks have thought of him as a

Macedonian barbarian but after he conquered almost all of the until-then known world, they started speaking of him as a Greek. I'm being sarcastic here but, believe me, I have no idea why the Greeks are so pissed off. I couldn't care less about this conflict because as an anarchist I don't believe in any state, but from other point of view I really can't understand a country that is trying to change your name. It's the same as somebody walking up to me and telling me that I must not be called Vasko.

Also, they have reasons to have problems with us because they did ethnic cleansing in the Egey part of Macedonia (which is now part of Greece) in 1948. Thousands of Macedonians were forced to leave their home and after that many of them still can't visit their home. All these people are still keeping the documents that are proof that they are owners of their houses, so because of that the Greek government is scared to death because they have to return the houses to the Macedonian refugees or they have to pay them for that!

MRR: What does the term "FYROM" mean and what's the story behind it?

Vasko: It stands for Former Yugoslavian Republic Of Macedonia. We're being called like this by the Greeks and because of their powerful international influence, most of the international community calls us by that name. Like I said earlier, *I couldn't care less* about the politicians and their nationalistic attitudes, because I'm not part of the people who believe in their lies. I have friends in Greece who are anarchists and punks and they don't have a problem with me because they are good people, not manipulated nationalists! For example, our bass player Rade at the moment is in a squat in Greece.

MRR: OK, back from a small lesson in international politics, what are the plans for FxPxOx in the next couple of months? Any new releases, gigs, tours?

Branimir: Plans are to practice a lot, he, he!

Vasko: Well we have to get some practice with our new drummer, Branimir, who is in Croatia, which is about 800 to 900 km from us. Our old drummer left the band because he broke his edge, and for us it is important FxPxOx remains a straightedge band because we're the only edge band in our country. That's why we asked Branimir to play with us, and we'll continue playing with our old drummer, but under a different name. We had to cancel our summer tour because we don't have a complete set with Branimir. Our latest release is the split 7" with My Revenge on Third Party Records and watch out for our upcoming split 7" with Secret 7 on Moo Cow Records.

By the end of this year, we'll appear on several compilations throughout the world on 625, Blackstar Foundation, Know Records, Schandmaul Records, Sick Of Talk Records, DHP*AK47. By the end of this summer we will record our last seven or eight songs with our old drummer, which will end up on a split 7" with a yet-to-be-determined band, and after that we'll start writing songs for our first LP. And hopefully after that we have plans to tour Europe and USA.

MRR: All right, thanks for the interview and all the best to you!

Branimir: Thank you for the interview and for interest in Balkan HC/punk scene!

Vasko: Daniel, thanks a lot for your support!! Everybody that is interested in FxPxOx feel free to contact us:

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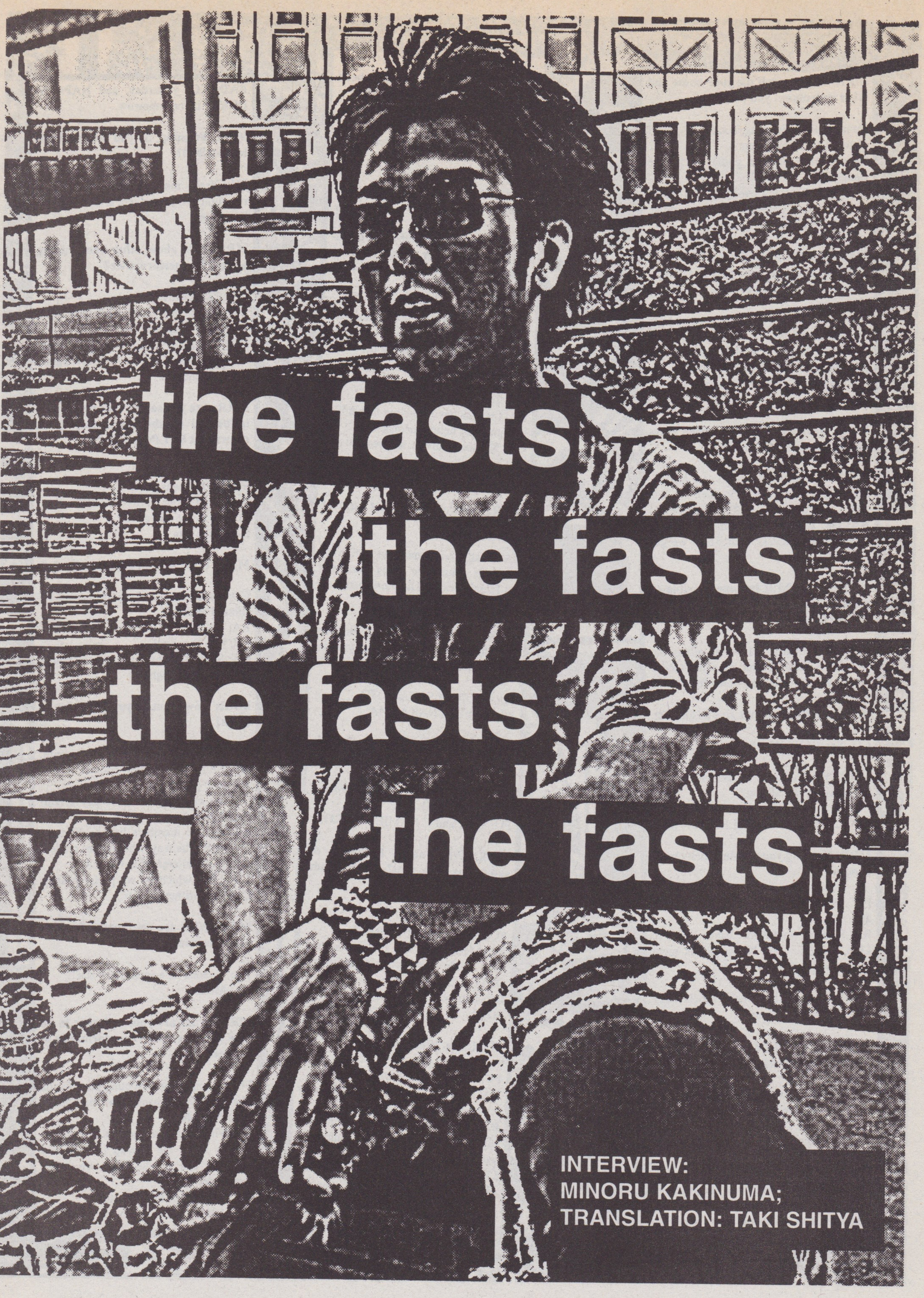

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INTERVIEW:
MINORU KAKINUMA;
TRANSLATION: TAKI SHITYA

MRR: Can you tell me your name and what instrument you play?

Fu-ming(FU): Fu-ming, vocal.
Raow(RA): Raow, drum.
Bancho(BA): Bancho, guitar, sex: Male (laughing)
Cow-zy(CO): Cow-zy 'KERO', bass.(laughing) Are you gonna trasnlate 'KERO' to English? (Laughing)

MRR: Tell me little about a history of FASTS? You guys used play as DANJIKI(meaning, to stop eating), right?

RA: It was Bancho's idea to come up with the new name, FASTS. Yeah, that's about it. I don't bother to explain details! We just chose an English name. FASTS has two meanings, to stop eating and to play fast.

MRR: Have all of you guys been playing together since DANJIKI?

RA: First, I joined the band as a bassist, just because we knew each other.
CO: I used to play in DEEP SLAUTER
BA: Oh, I know! The famous band in Kashiwa. [laughter]. That's how we got together.

MRR: How did it become possible to release your new album from SOUND POLLUTION.

CO: We wanted to release an album, so we sent a demo around to some record labels. We got good responses from some of them.
BA: Road Runner didn't give us an offer. [laughter].
CO: Nor did Fat Wreck Chords. [laughter]

MRR: Which labels expressed interest in releasing the album?

CO: 625 and SOUND POLLUTION (SP).

MRR: How did you decide which one to choose?

FU: Well, SP has better distribution, and…
RA: Some of my favorite bands are on it. Like, GAIA . You know, 625 is more like…you know what I mean?

MRR: Do you think both labels were excited about the band?

RA: Yes. That's why it was hard to decide. After everything, we chose SP anyway.

MRR: Have you gotten good responses after the release?

BA: I've received some emails from listeners on occasion.
CO: I bought it myself! Do you understand how much I'm into it? [laughter]
FU: I've seen some fans singing at shows.
RA: Wow, that makes me really happy!

MRR: How long have you guys been playing together since DANJIKI?

BA: For 7 years, I guess.
RA: We have been playing for almost 8 years!

MRR: Have you ever had members changed before?

BA: We've had a number of drummers. As for other parts, Fu-ming joined as a vocalist, and later Cow-zy as a bassist.

MRR: How do you feel when you play shows? Do you have any particular feeling about doing that?

FU: Just have fun!
RA: Yeah, enjoy it!
BA: I wanna have a feeling that is like a moment of being unconscious.
CO: Me too. But it's not easy to get that feeling.
BA: We gotta seek it!

MRR: Have you had that kind of feeling before?

BA: Yeah, sometimes, but not every time. Of course we enjoy ourselves but I think we could do more than that! We need to explore it.

MRR: What kind of music do you guys listen to? Tell me what you've found good recently?

FU: RYUICHI SAKAMOTO.
RA: MIYUKI NAKAJIMA.

MRR: Common guys! Are you kidding?

RA: To tell the truth, I love hardcore music. [laughter]
FU: Yeah, and …NAMIE AMURO.

MRR: What about backbone or something like that? What made you get into hardcore?

BA: BIOHAZARD.
FU: For me, it's MAD BALL.
RA: METALLICA, I guess, though at first I didn't appreciate them much. Oh yeah, SOB, I think.
BA: Lets see. For me, it's SOB. Yeah, SOB!

MRR: Ok. What about now?

FU:AMURO. (laughing)
RA: ASSFORT. I like their early ones 'cause they are fuckin' crazy.
BA: let me think… not particularly. My favorites are always changing. I listened to TURNING POINT today.
CO: BEASTIE BOYS is for today. MY BLOODY VALETINE was for yesterday. I also listened to ABURADAKO: yesterday, and NAPALM DEATH is for tomorrow.

MRR: Fu-ming, do you always listen to AMURO?

FU: Yeah, most of time recently. I bought it two weeks ago. It is so impressive to me.

MRR: How about other bands doing a great live performance?

CO: EXCLAIM.
BA: I remember how great they were when they played at Watts .
CO: I would say it's a kind of problem for us because there are very few bands that influence us.

MRR: Are you saying that you aren't influenced by the bands playing at shows, but by LPs or CDs?

CO: Right.
FU: KUMO was good.
CO: What about HAINO KEIJI?
FU: He is not that good.
RA: I like him.

MRR: What do you guys usually do?

CO: go to school, take photos, play FF [Final Fantasy]
RA: I work at a Japanese kimono store.
FU: I go to school.
BA: So do I. Oops, I wanted say something funny. [laughing]

MRR: How often do you guys play at clubs?

FU: I think around twice a month, depending on whether people around ask us to play.
CO: we can only afford to pay 2 hundred bucks.
BA: All the members live in different places. By the way, what makes readers abroad get interested in our talk?
CO: Like, which do we prefer Mariah Carey or Britney Spears?

MRR: What are you hoping for now after the release?

BA: I wanna be a rock'n roll star!
RA: Me too.

MRR: What are you exploring to be able to do a great live performance at a show?

FU: I wanna play with other great bands like WRENCH, reaching as high quality as possible.
CO: First of all, we need a new drummer to make the line-up perfect, and then we can pursue what we really wanna do.
BA: I wanna go the next step.
CO: I don't think we have found out

where to go next yet.
BA: I agree. In our mind, we are ready for that step, but in reality, we are not on that track yet.
RA: Yeah, that's the problem we have. We are almost losing our patience with it.

MRR: Are you more interested in playing in the U.S than in Japan? These days, it seems that the Japanese scene has been kinda down.

FU: Right. It is kinda quiet.
BA: I think it was more exciting some years ago. I don't listen to current bands.
RA: I feel a kind of responsibility for this situation. I mean, we could get it excited.

MRR: Many bands have a very similar sound and are doing the same stuff today. I think that's one of the reasons for that.

RA: None of the bands do anything new.
CO: Like, there are a couple of bands that haven't been exciting anymore after being together for two years. You know what I mean? [Laughing]

MRR: What about touring around in Europe.

RA: No, I'd rather go to China and other neighbor countries, it would be a great tour called the "Silk Road tour".
FU: What about playing at the Freedom Concert in Tibet?
BA: Maybe we can do that, if you ask them. [Laughing]

MRR: So do you wanna play at a big concert? I don't think many hardcore/punk bands like to do that.

RA and BA: Yeah, we do!
BA: we don't stick to certain music scene.

MRR: Ideology or something like that doesn't matter. Just enjoy your own music, ha?

RA: Yeah, as long as we can play with other good bands.
CO: I'm not talking about the ideology punk bands have. They are just fine. I mean they just have fun playing their own music. But in my opinion, it would be nice if people could have the chance to listen to different kinds of music.

MRR: Are you guys seriously thinking about a U.S. tour?

BA: We are.
CO: Sound Pollution has made an offer to us to do so. I heard Bancho got an email from them.
BA: They said it would be for a couple of week.

MRR: So what do you say about that?

BA: Of course we will, but it depends on money.
CO: Yeah, if we can arrange our schedule. We've got to go to school and work.

MRR: Ok, lets talk about other topics. How did you guys get the chance to be interviewed by MRR.

BA: I got an email from MRR without any notice.
CO: Hey, MRR, we want to tour in the U.S. please make it happened.

MRR: What is the response like to your new album?

BA: A friend of Ken asked me if we have stickers of the band, and I said, 'No'. [laughter]
CO: We will probably make something, like stickers or other stuff, if fans want it.
BA: If that make us rich! [Laughter]
CO: We are money mad! Baby!
BA: By the way, we need the drums of DISCORDANCE AXIS.
CO: Hey if you read this, please call us to make a deal on your drums!
BA: Our phone number is 090-Nin-Ni-Ku-Ku-Re-Yo. [laughter] *(interviewers note: he is joking with the pronunciation of Japanese number and the word, 'Ninniku,'which means garlic.)*
CO: I want garlic!
BA: That sound makes me hungry. I wanna eat pizza.
CO: The perfect harmony of pizza and coke!
BA: Hey, CO, which pizza do you like best?
CO: Pizza Hut.
BA: My favorite is Domino's 500-yen pizza.
CO: Anchovy on it?

MRR: What the most of lyrics about?

FU: I guess it's about the spiritual world on the dark side. [laughter]

MRR: What bands influenced your vocal style?

FU: Raow is saying that it's TOBY(H2O). But I'm not a sportsman.
CO: I think Mr. Shimura (a famous Japanese comedian) influenced his stage performance.

FU: No way!
BA: You never know he used listen to a lot of thrash in 80's!
BA: And you know what, he doesn't like thrash anymore!
FU: Yes, I still like it, though it's too much to listen to thrash for an hour. I played a CD of NO ONE RULES last night. They are great.
BA: I'm waiting for AGNOSTIC FRONT's new release

MRR: Do you have plans to play at any big festivals?

BA: No.
CO: People wouldn't know who we are if we did.
FU: We are still in the hardcore scene.

MRR: Do you wanna say something on what hardcore or punk should be?

Everyone: Nothing special.
CO: I don't like people categorizing our music and their expectation of us playing what they think of as hardcore or punk.
BA: For me, that wouldn't be a big problem. [laughter]
CO: You are saying that we are happy to go against their expectations, right?
RA: We've already had too many expectations and opinions. So we don't care anymore.
CO: Its impossible to get along with them in Japan!

MRR: Do you want to say something else, like the future goal of the band?

RA: I'm curious to know about being a famous band. In fact, I want to have that experience.
CO: I don't care if we are big or not.
FU: I just want to play music that I like, and that listeners can enjoy.
BA: I wanna be a rock 'n' roll star!
CO: I want to do a performance that is too great for fans to mosh around to so they quietly stay standing.
RA: I want to have fun. Music is the only thing that I can put everything into.

MRR: What is FASTS for you?

FU: Well, it's bathroom.
BA: ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER!! Ha!
CO: It's a part of my life.

MRR: Any last words?

CO: Hey, please buy our CD and enjoy it. And join our FASTS BRIGADE!
BA: Check the our next release. Tomorrow will be worse 4! It is very good! And email me C/O 666-fastsbrigade-666@ezweb.ne.jp. I'll reply to you when I'm free.
Everyone: Thanx MRR!!!!!

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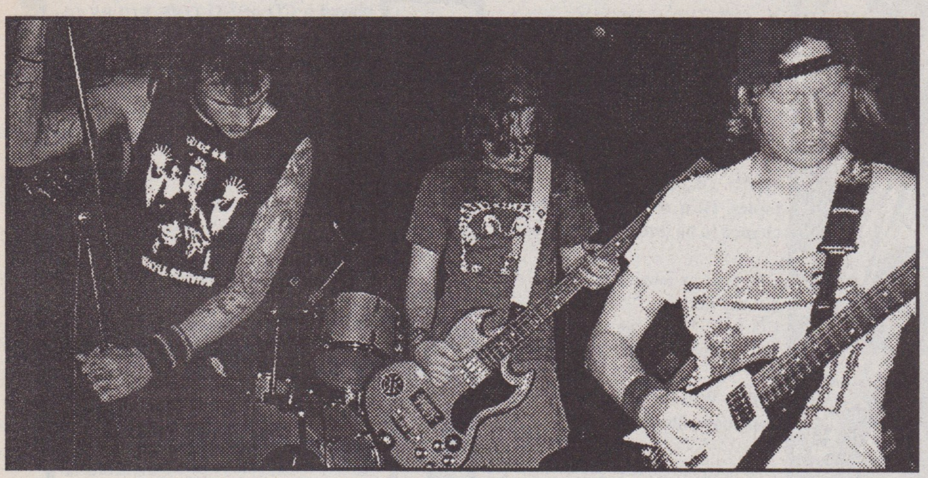

Annihilation Time is: Tony, drums; Graham, guitar; Chris, bass; Shaun, guitar; and Jimmy, vocals. Interview by Andy Instigate.

MRR: First question goes to Jimmy, the "new" singer: Did you move to California to play with Annihilation Time?

Jimmy: No. I just moved to Calfornia and then Nine Shocks Terror came up and took me with them on tour. We saw Annihilation Time and their singer fucking sucked, which made us argue about whom of us should be the new singer. Then one year later I toured with them, I roadied for them, but bailed early cause I met a chick. But who cares when you're a roadie? They sometimes came up to my house to play and the singer didn't wanna come so the The Worm sang. And then he didn't fit in. Too wet behind the ears to be a singer. So they asked me, and I'd never sung before, I always had a bass or a guitar to hide behind. But now after two years, I'm used to it.

MRR: Do you feel more comfortable standing on stage abroad where there are no friends who'd laugh at you?

Tony: I can see that. It might be wierd if you get all into it in front of your friends, like "Yeah!"

Graham: I think it's pretty wierd cause you're in another country and don't know what the culture is about. A lot of times I don't know how to act. When you're in another country you're not sure how people are gonna perceive things you say, but that's just me.

MRR: Did you have any bad experiences like this?

Graham: No, but people here are a lot more politically minded. Our friends in the U.S. are just kind of like shithead rocker, don't-care types.

MRR: Shaun you're the newest member. How long have you been in the band?

Shaun: I joined in January. They came through Cleveland on tour. I jumped in the van with them to come and live in California. When the tour was finished Graham said "Hey dude, you should jam with us."

MRR: What happened to the other guitarist?

Shaun: He got a girlfriend.

Jimmy: He said "Can my girlfriend go on tour with us?" We had a meeting about it and we agreed that she couldn't. No girls on tour with us.

Chris: The problem is that he brought it up while she was there.

Jimmy: Yeah, and I was the one who had to tell her. "Not because you're a girl, but because you're Jamie's girlfriend."

Graham: We don't want them fighting on tour.

MRR: Have you ever tried bringing a girlfriend on tour?

Tony: Well, Katie.

Graham: Yeah that was a one-time experinence. We brought our first singer's girlfriend with us on tour and she ended up freaking out and punching some other dude who was on tour with us. Her and Fred would fight, and we had to be in the middle of it. They screamed at each other and it got really ugly. Eventually she ended flying home from DC. After that we were like, we didn't have a no-girl policy, but it's just like having like girlfriends. Having to deal with all the emotional turmoil and shit, we decided we'd be better off.

MRR: The problem I can see with it is that these two people/lovers become one part of the tour crew, separate from the others. The typical thing is that this couple will hang out all the time, and that's boring.

Graham: Exactly, that's a drag.

MRR: So you've obviously done many tours? You've been around for how long?

Graham: Three and a half years now. This is our first time in Europe. We've done a bunch of stuff in California, three full US tours and a west coast tour.

Tony: That's a lot.

Graham: That kind of is a lot.

MRR: All this in three years?

Jimmy: Last time we were on tour we got busted for weed and we were like "Fuck, we gotta do this again!" The only way we make money is touring. We don't make a ton of money, but we earn more money with our band than we do with any of our jobs, I think. We play a show and get paid: that's more than a full day for any of us.

Graham: We had to back go on tour again cause we were so in debt from getting busted by the cops for having weed. In Texas. Our roadie/manager Noel actually had to do a night in jail. So we had to bail him out. That was $900. Then we had to pay for lawyers so he didn't have to go back in jail, and what was that? Two grand.

Jimmy: Also with our first CD, we still owe for that one.

Graham: We always manage to get in debt. I'm sure we will in Europe too.

MRR: When I booked the show in Malmö for Annihilation Time I'd never heard you, so I figured you'd play fast, brutal thrash, yada yada, because that was the rumor. I was very suprised at what you played and it's obvious that you draw a lot of influence from 70s rock'n'roll. Anything else you'd like to mention?

Tony: Well obviously, Black Flag.

Shaun: We're all influenced by way different stuff. Tony's really into NOFX and Danzig, Graham's really into Uriah Heep. Chris... well, Chris hates everything. I like a lot of metal, and the others can't stand it! Jimmy is a devout crusty punk.

Jimmy: Yeah well, not only. I like crustpunk but I like fucking Kiss and Black Sabbath, too.

Shaun: Yeah but you always ask us, when we make new songs, to make it more punk!

Jimmy: Always more punk! Always punk!

Shaun: It matches together and sounds unholy as fuck!

Graham: I think we all listen to a whole shitload of different stuff, and then we just play what we listen to. A shitload of stuff put together.

Jimmy: You guys got me into Bl'ast. And later Black Flag with Rollins. But I got Graham his first Alice Cooper record.

MRR: Do you feel you have to stick to one certain style?

Tony: We've all been in hardcore bands and they all

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sounded the same, and the cool thing with this band is that we all have the freedom to do any different style we want to.

Jimmy: And if someone doesn't like it they can eat a dick. Graham just said the funniest thing the other day: "With each new record we hope to alienate the audience we just got from the last one."

MRR: You're not afraid to do something different, as many other bands seem to be. You don't hesitate to throw in a shredding guitar solo more than once in a song.

Graham: I get sick of playing the same shit. I always get into new stuff and the influences are constantly changing. I couldn't write the same record five times, that would just suck. Each record for sure's gotta be different, or there's no point.

Shaun: A lot of kids get bummed on us or don't know what to think of us, cause they see us doing this crazy stuff. And they wanna hear traditional hardcore. We have a song called "Fast Forward To The Gore," which we played the other night in Belgium and this guy in the crowd shouted "Fast Forward To The *Core*!" so I guess he got bummed that we didn't play the same stuff.

Tony: He was waiting for the breakdown to come in so everyone could windmill at the same time like a Britney Spears video.

Graham: I just think it's lame to go too far in either direction. It's ridiculous to try being a *rock* band. And it's pointless to be stuck, like "Oh, I'm just gonna do this hardcore thing."

Jimmy: And break up after a year to make the records worth more.

MRR: And release 500 limited records on all the trendy labels.

Tony: You know what I think separates us, too, is that I don't think we write songs for the crowd. We don't write songs based for them to dance to. We just write whatever we feel.

Jimmy: I don't think enough kids have seen Radio Birdman videos to understand our music. In the videos they are doing "the pop" with their heads. Everyone's standing like this [*demonstrates*]. And that's what you should do when we play, you just gotta pop your head. THE POP! It's not the pogo, cause you don't boss around, you just stand there.

Shawn: I wanna see more fistbanging when we play!

Jimmy: *Kängnäve!*

MRR: The coolest thing is to combine rock-'n'roll with punk because it all has been done so many times before. All the fast EPs, recorded in 15 minutes etc. And all the rock clichés.

Jimmy: Rock'n'roll is fucking boring! False bullshit, fuck rock'n'roll. But rock'n'roll is also awesome. I couldn't say we're hardcore or rock'n'roll, we're somewhere in the middle I guess. But either one of them are so fucking boring. Rock'n'rollers be like "Ooh, look at my clothes! Look how cool I look!" And hardcore kids are like "Look at my records! *And* my clothes!" It's all about fresh gear. The only people who ever like us are the drunks, the crusties and freaks, all the wierdos. Somebody who doesn't give a fuck if it's not cool enough or whether you can dance to it.

MRR: You're also gonna record some songs in Holland?

Graham: Yeah for about four or five days. We have the songs ready and they'll be released on a new LP by DeadAlive, ooops, Manic Ride.

MRR: And the studio, what's it like?

Graham: Aaah, it's old, analog, all-70s equipment.

Chris: We got a copy of the guy's record who's recording us, it's a band called Orange Sunshine. And it sounds like 70s stuff.

Graham: Basically this guy is a complete recording nerd. He knows everything about that shit. So I just told him to be dominant in the studio and tell us what to do, because I want it to turn out as a good record! Not like he should change our songs, but sometimes I don't trust my own judgement.

Jimmy: Yeah, like reverb to this or let the drums go longer or something. And if we say "No fuck off!" he'll fuck off. Hopefully.

MRR: How did you hook up with this guy then?

Graham: Holier Than Thou went on tour eight months ago, we did this European tour. I don't know how but the drummer, Noel, got in contact with the guy. He came out to a couple HHT-shows. He was in that band Orange Sunshine, and gave us the CD. We ended up talking and he told us about how he got this recording studio, where he recorded Orange Sunshine, where he's got all vintage equipment. I just got this idea since there are no affordable studios like that in California and we were already coming out here to tour. He also has all sorts of Sunn equipment too!

MRR: So, even more debts for you!

Graham: No, that's Manic Ride's debt.

MRR: Would you consider recording digitally?

Jimmy: No!

Tony: That's what I always tried to avoid.

Graham: I can be pretty anal about recording. It's gotta be analog! Cause it sounds better!

MRR: And you can do the hardcore feedback start of a song if you record analog. You know you let the guitars feed and the you press the record button which makes that up-down sound.

Jimmy: I think one of our songs starts like that.

Graham: Yeah, it does!

MRR: So the *Bad Reputation* EP wasn't recorded digitally?

Jimmy: No, but somewhere it was fucked up. It's analog but who fucking cares when it came out digital.

MRR: Let's namedrop the others in your tour crew! You're all together eight people. There's Noel, the guy with the big hair.

Jimmy: No, his head is big!

Shaun: He's the official tag-along.

Graham: He does more for us than we do for ourselves.

Chris: He's like our manager. He keeps us from killing ourselves. Spritual leader.

MRR: So who else is in the crew?

Jimmy: Jesse, my old roommate. He's from San Diego and, when I first moved to California, I was at a party throwing bottles off a roof, being all pissed off and drunk. Then my friend Jen says "This

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is Jesse. He's a stoner. He goes to school here." I was like "Fuck this kid and his Guns N' Roses shirt!" Then later on he came over to my house and scraped my bong for me and we started smoking together. Then we lived together, there were nine of us in a two-bedroom apartment. We always broke everything.

Tony: Yeah.

Jimmy: Then sometimes Annihilation Time played gigs in the house. Before we went on tour, Jesse told me he had bought a ticket to Europe and luckily he fit in the van. But he wants to quit the tour to go see Hawkwind.

Graham: I'd give my left testicle to see Hawkwind.

Shaun: I will state for the record that I would drop Annihilation Time to join Rednex!

Tony: Oh yeah, the famous Swedish band! "Cotton Eye Joe!"

MRR: You know that's Sweden's Ted Nugent!

Graham: Fuck all those Anti-Cimex, Swedish classics. It's all about Rednex! The greatest band from Sweden ever!

Shaun: That's like the only Swedish band we can relate to.

Graham: Swedish hardcore, whatever.

MRR: So you'd quit the band for Rednex and Hawkwind. What punk band would make you do the same?

Jimmy: If they'd ask me to sing for Discharge. Or a Rudimentary Peni reunion.

Graham: There are so many shitty half-ass reunions these days.

Shaun: I probably wouldn't quit to join any of my favorite bands, cause I know how I react to "the new guy." Let's say Black Sabbath kicked Tony Iommi and got me to play. I know I would be a target for rocks and spit and shit and insults and ass-kicking in the parking lot. Cause I'm not Tony Iommi.

MRR: So when Ozzy Osbourne asks you to join you'll say no?

Shaun: Ha ha.

Jimmy: Ozzy's wife would ask cause he's such a moron these days.

Shaun: I think Ozzy died five years ago, they just pump him full of these drugs to make him move around.

MRR: This reality show on TV, The Ozbournes, is totally embarrassing.

Shaun: Yeah, it's pathetic. His kids are the most despicable brats ever. They're complaining about the dumbest shit and meanwhile they have it all. I grew up in a household without a dad and we spent weeks in the winter without electricity. These kids have everything and they're like "Oh, I'm not getting enough money from this record deal, give me $1,000 to go shopping, Daddy." Stuff like that, it's really pathetic.

MRR: We must not forget the last member of the crew: Ronaldo, the designated driver!

Toni: Oh yeah, and there's Tom, the first driver. He was real cool. Then he was switched with Ronaldo, who's really cool.

Jimmy: We heard all these horror stories of Ronaldo that he'd be pissed off and wouldn't talk to you. But he's great, he makes jokes, he honks the horn at hot chicks, he smokes hash with us, he's probably in the van right now smoking. That's crucial for us, everyone gets fucked up around us!

MRR: Anything I forgot to ask you? Anything you wanna stress about the amazing Annihilation Time?

Tony: Danzig rules is all I can say.

Jimmy: It's important to be drunk when you see us! Or stoned.

Chris: Yeah.

Jimmy: Even if the place has a no drinking policy, keep drinking. Drink through the rules.

Chris: You were talking about bringing a merch table with beers.

MRR: Shaun, you talked about growing up before. Was your family very poor?

Jimmy: Shaun grew up in the city, in Cleveland. The rest of us are suburban little shits. My parents have too much money, not like we're rich kids, but comfortably suburban, while his mom couldn't pay the bills. She was working her ass off. He had to worry about getting beat up by kids, and we probably made fun of kids. You know the difference if you grow up in the city or the suburbs?

MRR: Actually, in Sweden, the city is where the rich people can afford to live. Suburbs are what I would describe as ghettos, but I know that's different in America.

Graham: That's cause the cities here aren't fucked up right?

MRR: Not really, or maybe not as much as American cities. Do you think this is what makes you wanna play hardcore? The frustrations from living in either cities or suburbs?

Shaun: I think so. Growing up, I was listened to stuff like Sabbath and metal. Then I found out about punk and I started listing to stuff like GBH, traditional punk bands. Then I heard this hardcore stuff and it was so much more *aggravated.* It kind of fit how I was feeling. I was always pissed off and then I found my thing. This is like a vehicle, like my voice. The band that I heard that excited me was H100s, and from there on, I wanted to play heavy, disgruntled stuff.

MRR: Disgruntle?

Jimmy: You know like "Arrrrrgggh!" Life is such a pain in the ass. You see a guy at work who's mad, then he's disgruntled. He's doing the same shit every day and has to keep on doing it. Just to keep on, that's disgruntled. And one day he's gonna fucking explode!

Shaun: But we're not violent people or anything like that at all.

Jimmy: No one of us has ever been arrested for violence.

Shaun: Well, I have.

Jimmy: That's why I said it! Shaun's a violent offender, a cop spitter!

Chris: That's an assault man.

Jimmy: I'm a lover, myself.

Graham: Everyone just needs to mellow out.

MRR: Do you think your different childhoods make your goals today different, as with this band?

Graham: I think if you're growing up in a city, you're gonna be fucking pissed off, cause you're living in a shitty environment. And if you grow up in the suburb you're gonna get bored out of your ass.

MRR: Yeah, and high expectations from your parents right?

Tony: If you're from the city, you're band's gonna sound like the Cro-Mags or something.

Jimmy: And if you're all from the city, your band's gonna be brutally awesome. The toughest band, if you're all grown up in the city. Growing up in the suburbs, it gives us more of an opportunity to have music, equipment, and have a garage to practice in! But then again all you see is the same white kids and it just pisses us off everyday.

Graham: Just fucking pure boredom.

Jimmy: I moved out of the suburbs as soon as I could. But I never ran away, cause I had bands, and

beeing in a band is the best thing ever! You get free beer.
Graham: I say fuck all that shit, I just love playing music. That's the one thing that bums me out about bands nowadays. It seems like people start bands just to be in a band, as supposed to be actually into music. I think you get a lot of shitty music that way. They aren't into the sound and that's an important factor. I think that's what music, especially hardcore, is lacking nowadays. People genuinly liking music, not just trying to be a part of some scene.
MRR: I think the same goes for record labels. It's so easy to release records and people seem to have forgotten about demo tapes, and all these bullshit records come out. Do you still rehearse in a garage?
Graham: Actually, we don't rehearse much, cause it's so hard to find a place. We rehearsed in Chris's garage and in this office space for rent just to get tight for this tour and the LP we're gonna record. We had all these new songs to learn.
Shaun: We kept getting kicked out of places, rehearsal studios.
Graham: That's the most frustrating difficult part about this band, trying to find a place where we all can play music. It's really the hardest part.
Shaun: Plus not everyone of us have cars and the transportation system in Ventura is like shit. Skitsystem. Just because it's southern California they expect everyone to have a car. They have this unreliable transportation system, you can't get around.
Jimmy: Chris drives!
Chris: Yeah, I deliver burritos with my truck.
MRR: Let me know your opinions on scene costumes in hardcore. Do you select any specific t-shirts to look cool?
Everybody: Ha ha, no, hell no!
Tony: If we play a big show I wear my friend's band's shirt. Advertising, sort of.
Jimmy: I try not to wear shorts, but me and Tony are always wearing shorts cause we're lazy dudes.
MRR: Sometimes when I play at a really crusty sort of show, I think it can be fun to wear a silly pop shirt or something just to be different.
Tony: I don't think we ever think about that, but then again, I really like watching bands who look cool. You know what I mean.
MRR: Of course most people say "Fuck costumes," but it actually does something, it makes the appearance of the band a lot sharper.
Jimmy: You gotta pick what you'll bring on tour. Mostly it's about what fits good.
Graham: I guess I'm guilty of trying. I try to look a certain way. Really, I do worry about that, now that I think about it.
MRR: Now I'd like to ask you what the future holds for Annihilation Time? You're gonna release this LP on Manic Ride. What other plans? More touring?
Shaun: We're gonna take a break.
Graham: Are we? Yeah that's right. I'm going on tour with Knife Fight after this tour, and then after that I'm going on a tour with Holier Than Thou. But my whole plan for Annihilation Time is to stay together for a ridiculously long amount of time. I just wanna put out about a million records that everyone hates.
Shaun: We're gonna stick around 'til we turn into a later-era King Crimson.
MRR: So we never know what to expect from Annihilation Time? You might as well do some easy listening bop-whappa-doo-ba.
Shaun: Yeah, 20 years down the road.
Jimmy: I don't wanna be a famous rock star. I would never wanna be a major label thing. All I care about is having friends in every town. They could put a show up and even though it's only five kids and everyone hates us, we have a place to sleep and get drunk. That's the best thing about touring.
MRR: Why do you always presume that people hate you? Expectations from experience?
Chris: Cause everyone hates us. We can't play in Ventura, our hometown. We have a reputation for breaking all the stuff.
Jimmy: We're so used to it.
Tony: But the kids like it. Yeah.
MRR: So you're used to people hating you, at least in your hometown?
Jimmy: It's not about hating, more don't-understand.
Chris: They don't trust us.
MRR: Is this because people expect you to play either rock'n'roll or hardcore and you do neither?
Graham: Exactly, we play a lot of strictly hardcore shows where people look at each other and scratch their heads.
Tony: People like us more at punk shows.
Jimmy: Where we fit in, if we fit in at all, would be at punk shows where people drink and party. Punk shows are like a party. I know there's a serious political agenda, and the fun just comes with it. But not for us, we don't try to put any political anything with our music. It more like a party.
Chris: Beer.
Jimmy: Our music is made to drink beer to.
Shaun: I think a lot of people get bummed on us because we're shithead kids that wanna have fun. A lot of people have this strong mature political thing going on and they just think we're assholes.
MRR: You told me about all the kids at the show in Uppsala (Sweden) and how excited you were about it.
Graham: That was great fun. We had a party afterwards and hung out with these Swedish metalhead guys. Uppsala is a great place.
Jimmy: We stole bikes, smashed them up, and threw them in the river.
Chris: Me and Shaun stole a bike, doubled it downtown, and threw it in the river.
Jimmy: Me, Graham, and Noel were with this English metalhead grindcore dude who had a Swedish army bike, real heavy. He was like "Here, ride it! Jump off a farthinder [*speed bump*], smash things!" We crashed into twenty parked bikes but the army bike still did strong. It was fun! Then the sun came up.
MRR: Shout outs?
We wanna say thank you to all of our friends in Sweden: The Rednex, Kangaroo Records–Henk and Roland, Jon Collins, our driver Ronaldo and Tom, Upstab, Guy from Den Haag, Street Thrash, The Worm, Reason Of Insanity, Satanic Worship, Gradys Records, and you, Andy.
MRR: Thank you! What's the last word?
Jimmy: Toxic Mecka.
MRR: What?!
Jimmy: Thank you in Swedish?
MRR: Aha, OK, that's pronounced *Tack så mycket!*

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Interview conducted May 20th, 2004. Recorded at KBOO, edited in a parking lot across the street from Voodoo Doughnut. Interview by Fred Landeen and Erin Yanke. The Observers' debut 7", "Lead Pill", is available on Super Secret Records. Photos by Chrystaei Branchaw, Tucker Reda and Amanda.

The Observers

MRR: Introduce yourselves.

Kashani: I'm Johnny Kashani, I play guitars in The Observers.

Doug: My name's Doug and I do lead vocals.

Mike: I'm Mike, and I play the drums.

Colin: My name's Colin Grigson, I play bass and I play back-up vocals

MRR: This band started with two ex-members of The Speds. Why didn't you just replace those members and continue on as The Speds?

C: I'm really picky about certain things. It had been the same four members in The Speds for our entire career and I felt like it would be not the same to just keep the name. Keeping a name means nothing to me and keeping the people is very important to me. We decided to just do a new band.

MRR: When you started The Observers, was it that much of a departure, musically or ideologically?

D: Well, at first it wasn't. There were definitely some things that I wanted to do differently with The Observers that we were starting to do with The Speds. A little bit with how the songwriting went, and a little more experimentation. I studied music under a bass player for this free jazz ensemble from the 70's. He really introduced me to the possibilities of free form music, and so that started getting incorporated into The Observers. We had a really hard time finding a line up that would stick. Before Mike joined the band I think we had practiced with 9 different drummers.

MRR: What drove them away?

D: One thing that weeded out a lot of the initial drummers was that the first song that we were trying to learn had a complex time signature to it. Some of the guys really struggled with it, and I'm sure the band seemed less like rockin', and more like... math to them

MRR: Your early stuff had a greater ratio of noise and weirder experimental aspects in the songs. Was this done deliberately to confuse the kids, or to challenge them?

D: A little bit, yeah, confusing kids is good, I think. Also, showing them that you can do a lot of different things and it can still be Punk. You know, you don't have to sound like The Casualties to be Punk Rock...

MRR: What?! Wait! Stop the presses! Does Mike Thorn know this? Is the perception that The Observers is "Doug's band" true?

M: As Doug does most of the song writing and considering that I came into the band later, I sort of understand that notion and see where it comes from, but I don't consider it that. I'd like to consider myself integral, along with my band mates.

K: I feel like we all do a portion of work in the band and put in efforts. It doesn't really seem like it's a one-man effort.

C: Ultimately, I do think of it as Doug's band, but I don't think that means that anybody is unimportant 'cause they're not Doug. It's mainly his ideas and processes going into what makes The Observers. I don't think we could be The Observers without Doug, but I don't think that makes any of us any less valuable.

MRR: I got the impression when the band first started that it was a Doug masterminded project.

C: Usually, Doug works on riffs, or riffs are shown to Doug and then Doug comes back with a song. So, though we do have input in the songwriting process, it doesn't make Doug anything less of a "mastermind".

MRR: You have gone to great lengths to set yourself apart and experiment. What have you tried, what has worked, and what hasn't?

M: Pompadours are out. They just don't work.

D: I think one thing that I learned early on is a lot of the stuff that we do on the recordings to make different sounds should not be done live because they are *ridiculous*.

MRR: Give an example.

D: In the recordings I'll use a lot of violin bow stuff on the guitars. At one of the early showsI pulled out the violin bow and uh, yeah, that didn't go over very well. That lasted one show.

MRR: Yeah, that was rough to watch. It's one of those points where you're embarrassed for your friend.

D: Yeah, when you experiment with stuff, not everything's gonna work. You can't really be afraid of looking ridiculous sometimes. Like at the first Exploding Hearts show, Adam pulled out a tambourine. I remember thinking "oh, come on, a tambourine?" I remember going away from it thinking well, that was pretty terrible, but then again, I like the fact that he just did that. I'm sure on the recording, (I don't remember what song it was), there's a tambourine, but I don't think I ever saw him pull one out

tambourine, but I don't think I ever saw him pull one out at a show again.

K: In the studio, there was a time when I took my other guitar, which has a humbucker on it. What I did was, I kind of ate it out.

(The rest of the band turns beet red)

MRR: Excuse me?

K: I placed the humbucker to my mouth and pleasured it, which made really weird sounds, which you can hear on the forthcoming album. See if you can guess the tracks.

M: I thought you were just *yelling* into it. I don't ever want to listen to the record again!

(Big laughs)

K: That's something I would probably not do live.

MRR: Why did you have the urge to experiment and mess with the rock and Punk formulas?

D: I think the main reason was I'm really concerned with trying to make music that I haven't heard before. It's something I think about consciously.

M: It's worth striving for.

D: Yeah, I'd like to try different things, and that means listening to other types of music. You know, maybe listening to some jazz and seeing "well, what do I like about this and how can I incorporate it into what I'm doing?". I think that no matter what I listen to, whatever I pull from, no matter how it goes through my filter it's going to come out Punk, because that's what I know. I think more people are starting to get bored by the traditional music formula, cause when I go see other bands that aren't Punk I see a lot of complex song writing.

M: People are bending the rules more and more.

D: We are still trying to keep the songs catchy, but also having an unpredictable element to them. That's one thing that pushes me.

M: And the desire to sound like Iron Butterfly.

C: Iron Maiden, actually, is Doug's favorite band.

MRR: Are there Punk bands whom you've drawn from for ideas for inspiration for experimentation?

D: I think The Stranglers were interesting 'cause they experiment with a lot of ways of writing songs. The Dead Kennedys too.

with a lot of ways of writing songs. The Dead Kennedys too.

K: I think Joy Division has definitely been an influence on my guitar playing and what I contribute.

MRR: Any new bands doing stuff...

D: I really like The Tyrades a whole lot. I was really impressed when we played with them.

MRR: Your lyrics cover subjects like depression, contemplating suicide, death of friends, your own mortality and loneliness. Why do you dwell on such depressing stuff? Do you guys just walk around with a black cloud over your head?

C: Johnny Kashani does.

D: Yeah, but it's a cute little cloud. No, I think any person is complex and has all the ranges of emotions, and if you meet any of us, we're all pretty upbeat jovial individuals who like to joke around and don't want to bring you down with how depressed they are.

MRR: Until the band starts to play.

D: It's got to be let out somewhere I guess. It's not a conscious thing that I do, it's just what I do.

M: There are plenty of upbeat bands out there, that's just perhaps not our niche.

C: Plus, I think if you saw us live, though Doug may seem to be feeling these emotions, me and Mike specifically seem happy, while Kashani, he's in his own place. He seems neither happy nor upset.

MRR: Are there any politics in any of your songs?

D: Yeah. A song like "Symbols, Slogans, Lies" is straight up political. It's a song that has to do with the fighting right now between the US and different Middle Eastern countries, and how everyone thinks that they're in the right, and their god is bigger. One of the lines in the song is 'What makes a benevolent religion misanthropic?'

(At Erin Yanke's request, here are definitions of the two big words that Doug just used. Benevolent- Desiring to help others; charitable. ; Misanthropic- characterized by hatred, dislike, or distrust of humanity.)

...How does it get to the point where Christianity and all the "turn the other cheek" stuff has become this? How many people have died in the Middle East now because of our actions over there? It's also not meant to be pointing the finger at "them" or "us", it's everybody, using religion as an excuse to go to war.

MRR: Do you guys prefer to play bar or all ages shows? You seem to do a lot of both.

C: All Ages. I like to interact with the audience. At bars people just kind of bars people just kind of stand there and drink and they might like you a lot but they don't show it, they just stand in the back. I really respect all ages audiences because they're not afraid to sing along or to move to the music or to interact with you.

K: There's definitely more energy with all ages.

M: I think all shows should be open to all ages, the circumstances just aren't such, and that's why we play a mix of both.

D: Too many bands neglect the all ages scene because "well, I'm 30 now, I don't like all ages shows, I need to have my beer when I play". Or they'll play one all ages show and the kids maybe won't be into it right off the bat so they just say "forget that". All ages shows are awesome because of the energy and everybody gets really into it and has a great time. Those are probably the most fun shows, but one thing I do like about bar shows is I feel like the older crowd may actually be listening to the music more.

MRR: Colin, when you play, you spend most of the time not on stage, but walking out into the audience. What are you doing out there?

C: I don't know, just trying to put on a good show, I guess. I kind of have a theory about how I don't like the whole audience / band thing, it should be merged. My being in the audience would be an example of that. Plus, I always think it's really funny to make audience members uncomfortable. Probably my favorite moment as a stage person ever was once The Speds were playing with The Hunches. Chris Gunn was kind of standing there, and I hopped off the stage, and started walking up to him, and he slowly started walking away, and then running away and I'm like..."That was Awesome! He's *Chris Gunn* for Christ sake!" He always tries to do that with the audience, but I felt like I really made him uncomfortable, and so my job was done.

MRR: Colin and Mike, you both play in other bands that are musically and lyrically markedly different from The Observers. What other types of bands and music do you listen to, what type of bands are you also in?

M: I listen to a wide variety of music, Punk Rock of all different sub-genres, including the dreaded indie rock and emo, classical, folk, and jazz, etc. I play in a couple different bands, one of which is The Minds, who play poppy, keyboard laden garage rock. And a band called The Tethers who are just getting off the ground, playing garage rock, essentially. Colin and I also play in Riot Cop, who are political surf Punk.

C: I don't listen to a lot of the stuff that Doug listens to. I pretty much detest jazz, classical and folk. That not being an influence is probably the main difference in other projects

MRR: How many bands are you in Colin?

C: I don't know.

(Laughing...)

MRR: Are you a band that likes to tour, or will tour?

D: Yeah, as much as we can.

K: Love to tour.

D: We have a tour coming up this summer.

M: Mid-August through Mid-September, touring the entire US. One of the things I love the most about Punk Rock is playing shows, and in new places.

K: I'm always really eager to tour, even when it's not touring, like we're just going to Eugene. I'm like "Tour!" or Medford, "Tour!"

MRR: Wilsonville...

K: Yeah seriously, Wilsonville. It just felt like, we're in the van, going, playing a show, I really love doing that.

C: I think if I could play the same place every night for a month I'd be just as happy. I just like playing shows a lot.

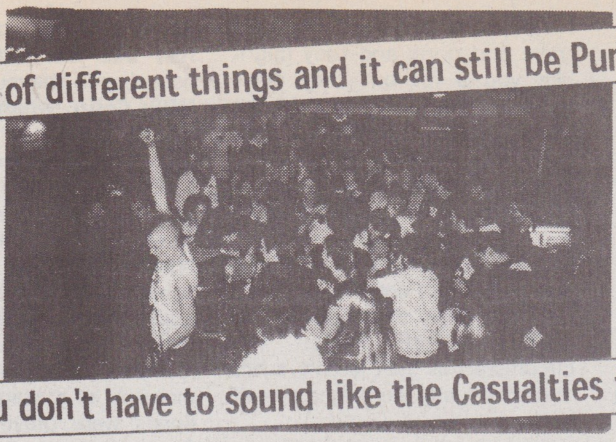
MRR: Really? Are you serious about that?

C: Yeah.

D: That's why he's in a hundred bands.

M: So he does sometimes play the same place for a month straight, it's weird.

"...You can do a lot of different things and it can still be Punk.



You know, you don't have to sound like the Casualties for it to be Punk Rock."

MRR: You made it into Bobby Manic's Top 10 List, but it wasn't for your music. What was that about, and can you tell me what happened?

M: Bobby Manic's a friend of mine, I arranged for us to stay with him on a tour down through California, so we did, and some interesting things happened.

C: Kashani and I have a dynamic, let's say, when it's just him and me in the back of the van. He's really the only one that seems to enjoy it at the level I do. We'll say, "okay, so what if Black Flag were The Misfits?" I wouldn't say we're competitive, but I wouldn't say we're not, about certain things. So, it's going to sound weird, it sounded weird to anyone besides me and Kashani at the time, but ... I think we were talking about you know, "I could do more down strokes than you", on guitar or bass or something. He was pretty convinced he could do more than me, I was telling him this was all lies. I could do them until 8 in the morning, and then I could do some more. So, we got a look in our eyes, and it was like, all right, let's find out. So we decided to just do some down strokes on our jeans while sitting in Bobby Manic's apartment.

M: The Down Stroke Off, as it was known.

C: Kashani and I were talking quietly and trying to not show it, we were just moving our hands, just you know, doing down strokes on our jeans, kind of staring at each others eyes, like "you know you're gonna fucking bite it before me". Eventually, I think Doug said, "what are you guys doing?" and we're like "nothing." "Then stop that" and we're like "uh, no." Then I think Bobby said, "seriously, what are you guys doing?" "Seriously, don't worry about it, it's gonna be done pretty quick." Then they noticed it was, in fact, down strokes that we were doing on our jeans. Doug then said, "please stop, you're embarrassing me". At that point Mike pointed out how we were embarrassing him in front of his friend. Bobby was seriously like "what are you doing?"

D: Bobby, whom we'd known for a whole 15 minutes at this point...

C: On the entire ride to Sacramento I had to go number two's so bad, that pretty much we went into his apartment, and I was like "I need to use the bathroom". But he didn't have a fan, so the entire apartment smelled like said number two's. I did a courtesy flush, it didn't matter, it was powerful. So the first thing that he learned about us was he just kept staring at us, "wow, that smells terrible" and I'm sorry, I had nothing else to do, I needed to get it out. There we are. Then the second thing, Kashani and me doing the down strokes. Eventually we left the room to continue it because it really bothered everybody that we kept doing them despite them repeatedly telling us to stop.

MRR: You're saying it was pretty subtle. Anyone else?

M: It started out subtle.

MRR: And then did the Down Stroke Off become quite vigorous?

K: The thing was, I not only believed I could do more down strokes than Colin could, I believed I could do them faster. So, yes it did get more vigorous, it had to be moved to another room, and it went on for hours but it seemed like days. It was in the spirit of a certain Ramone.

MRR: How long did this go on?

D: Way too long.

M: I'd give it maybe an hour.

D: And it got pretty bad to the point where they were holding their wrists and still doing down strokes.

MRR: So did someone lose?

K: Actually we had to agree to stop at the same time, because there was no winner, there was no loser. We decided to count down and then stop.

C: And although this started as a friendly thing, both Kashani and myself kept saying "I'm doing it faster than you" and "You're cheating". There was not good sportsmanship. I was convinced he was doing it at half my speed.

MRR: What else do you have in the works?

M: A record!

C: We've got an LP/CD titled "So What's Left Now" coming out on Vinyl Warning.

D: Look for it this summer. I'm very excited about it being an LP on vinyl. That's really important. Too many bands just put out CD's these days.

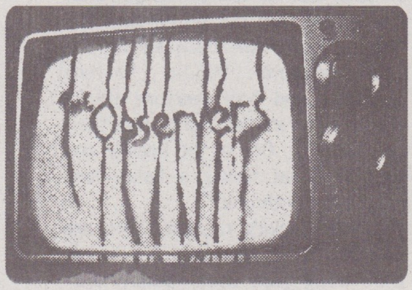
M: I'm excited about working with a label with Vinyl in the name, for I am a vinyl collector, and that's a good thing. Big artwork. Big.

K: We've been kind of, in our brains, thinking about producing a video for a song of ours called "Normally Normal". We don't know exactly when that will come out, but it's in the works. Stay tuned.

D: Hopefully it will include a lot of people doing the "safety dance" and that's all I'll say.

MRR: Final Thoughts?

D: Callie, do your homework!



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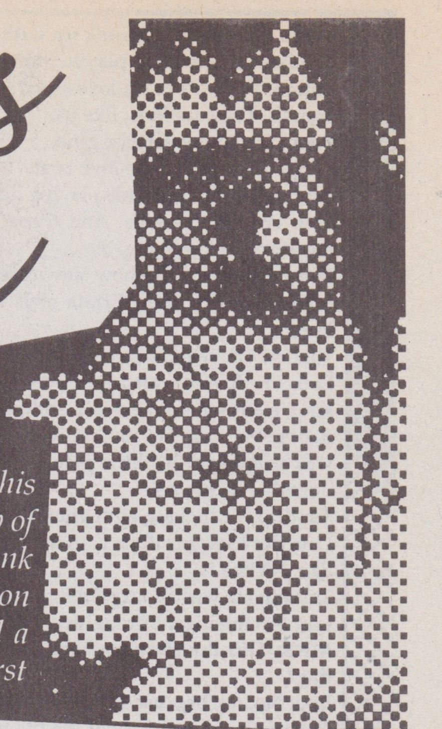
Les Georges Leningrad



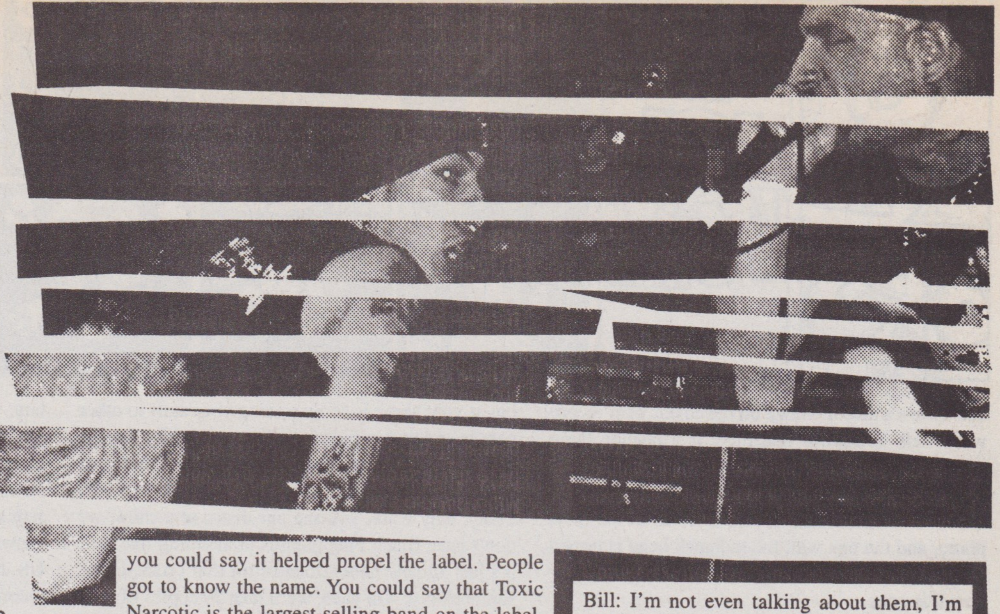
We have a lot of masks, and a lot of attitude – Les Georges Leningrad! Whilst I was visiting the great city of Montreal, I was handed a disc of this strange art punk group called-Les Georges Leningrad. This band, made up of two boys and two girls, is craft inspired and obtrusively Slits/Kleenex punk with a modern twist. They are increasingly becoming a bigger phenomenon after being on tours with Erase Errata, Numbers and The Locust. I had a chance to chat with these Alice in Wonderland rock stars after their first show in NYC in April 2003.

MRR: So, who plays what instrument in the band?
Pony: We can name our names, but we play everything.
Mingo: Yeah, my name is Mingo.
Pony: My name is Pony!
Tundra: My name is Tundra!
Lou: My name is Lou from India. I play the drums, I sing a little bit, and I am the beat-box.
MRR: This is your first US tour?
Tundra: Yes, it is.
Lou: And we are really happy, because people here are so kind. Because in Quebec, people say that Americans are bad people.
Tundra: It's the media who says that!
Lou: No, no, it's true. We were in Baltimore, Washington, and things and people are so, so, so fucking nice.
Pony: Bacteria was not part of the party; bacteria, SARS, we didn't get any syndrome at all.
Tundra: It actually made me paranoid. I wondered, "Hmmm, why are they so nice?" It made me paranoid.
MRR: Yeah, just last week my friend bought an An Albatross t-shirt and left it in the club in New York City, by accident. We went back to the show and it was still there!
Pony: Still a small city.
MRR: Maybe people thought it smelled bad, or something.
Tundra: Ah, yeah, "Bad Smell."
MRR: Any trouble getting over the border?
Pony: No, it's because we have a pink drum.
Mingo: Yeah, we have a pink drum.
Lou: First of all, it was a woman inspector.
Pony: She fell in love.
Lou: We are more comfortable with women. Because we like women, ya know? Even women like women, in the band, you know? So we… (Lou starts dancing and making the love juice motions)
Pony: So there were very funky costumes.
MRR: You didn't have to pay a tax?
Lou: No.
Tundra: She didn't check anything. She did not even ask us if we had food, nothing. Just, "Have a great trip in America."
Lou: But check for the Murphy's Law, because when we go back…
Pony: And check for the monkey law too.
MRR: So you guys think America's okay, huh?
All: *Yeah!*
Tundra: Because, I will take Lou of Bombay's word, that in America there's the worst and best, because there's so much country and so many people. You guys have the best things and the worst things.
Pony: There's the "P," and there's the "T," and there's the "Lou," and there's the "P," and there's no "W."
Lou: You guys shit the best things ever and the worst things ever, and we like that.
Tundra: It's interesting.
Lou: We are that!
Mingo: This is like a magnet.
Pony: This is like a pearl on shit, umm, screen.
Tundra: It's like life, you know? It's not good. It's interesting.
Mingo: It feels like home.
MRR: How do you guys feel about the war with Iraq?
Pony: We don't talk about it. We don't care.
Mingo: I don't have a position.
Tundra: We don't talk about politics.
Pony: We are not John Lennon. We are Les Georges Leningrad.

MRR: So how'd you hook up with Erase Errata for this tour?
Tundra: They came to play in Montreal and we got along so well.
Mingo: Yeah, it's like a love story.
Tundra: They are kids, like us.
Pony: Lovely moustache girls.
Mingo: This is like the love boat.
Tundra: We are like kids playing in the yard.
Lou: We are like kids. And those girls are like kids. And kids together are like, a big, big…
Pony: Retarded sideshow showcase.
MRR: Are the Erase Errata girls treating you all right on the tour?
Tundra: Oh yeah, they treat us with smiles.
Lou: I'm fucking surprised everything is so easy. People are so kind, everywhere we crash, and people are so artistic and imaginative. We were in Providence, RI with that guy, a fireman, and I was sleeping at his little place and he said, "Oh, you want condoms?" No, no, no.
Tundra: For fucking with your girlfriend…
Lou: But I saw his library, all the books, Shakespeare, Sartre. I was like, "Whoa."
Tundra: He was an arty firefighter.
Lou: An intelligent firefighter.
MRR: Did the fireman have to get called into work the next day?
Lou: No, no, because he was drunk and really cozy.
Tundra: He didn't answer the phone in the morning.
Lou: He was a little scary with the leather jacket, but after that, he was like a little kid.
Tundra: Like us. We hang around with kids. All of our notions are based on pleasure. When there is no more pleasure there is no more Les Georges Leningrad. It's the law.
MRR: That's what Johnny Rotten said about the Sex Pistols once.
Tundra: Yay? Aww, Johnny knows what he's talking about.
Pony: But we are not saving a queen.
Tundra: I'm the queen. You'll have to save me.
Pony: No! I'll punch you! Because I am the queen! We are the twin towers! Go on a tour of the twin tours! (giggles)
MRR: So! You guys have one record out now, one full-length album, right?
Tundra: Yay, a big LP. Red.
Lou: It's called *Deux Hot dogs Moutarde Chou.*
Tundra: Which means, two hot dogs, mustard and cabbage.
Mingo: Coleslaw.
Tundra: No, cabbage.
Lou: Coleslaw.
Pony: It's like an erotic plastic toy.
Lou: It's not good for the ears, but it's really creative. It's just that we don't have any money or stuff.
Tundra: Scratch kitchen. Les Georges Leningrad is like a scratch kitchen.
MRR: So did you put the record out yourselves, or did you get a record label to?
Tundra: We are going to have a label for the next one, but this one we did ourselves, because we wanted to do it ourselves.
Pony: It's the Coco Cognac label.
Tundra: It's independent. It's also made in Taiwan, by the way.
Lou: But we'll be on something that you didn't think about.
Pony: But it is very mysterious, you will not know anything about it.
MRR: *A secret?*
Pony: Yay, no scoop, no scoop. (Note: After some super-sleuthing, I've found that Troubleman Unlimited is the mysterious record label Les Georges Leningrad is talking about)
MRR: What does the band's name mean?
Pony: Les Georges Leningrad.
Lou: I'll take the mic for that. It's one name and it's one city. It can be a lot of names and a lot of cities. It can be Les Paul Alexandria, or Les Marcel New York.
Pony: Or Les Georges Baghdad.
Lou: Because we have this name, we have this guy and we have this city. Investigation, you know? We are searching for something. But we have a name and a city, and the game goes on.
Pony: Or Lily de Paris.
Mingo: Or the Roger Baltimore.
Lou: We saw that Roger Baltimore and it was scary.
Pony: It is all about the petro-chemical rock and the nuclear power stations.
Tundra: Yes, we are pioneers of the petro-chemical rock, by the way. If you don't ask the question, I'll tell you the answer.
Lou: But it is an image too concrete, not in the socks, but too concrete…the creation, you know?
MRR: Yeah, no. Okay, moving on, so Les Lily de Paris mixes performance art with the punk music. Do you prefer one over the other?
Tundra: One does not go without the other.
Pony: Yeah, like eating chicken nuggets or laughing with the everyday apocalypse.
Lou: Yeah, remember that-laugh with the everyday apocalypse, and you'll stay a kid, like us.
Pony: Being a taxi-driver in a very strange city, it's all about that. Or being a pirate in a haunted house or looking for treasure in the…
Lou: The sewer! Pirate sewers! Sewer Pirates! With rats and things.
MRR: Hmm, but how do you keep your live shows new and fresh? Do you come up with new costumes?
Lou: All the time.
Pony: All the time. Anywhere.
MRR: Well, I'm sure that mask Mingo wore on stage tonight took some time to make.
Tundra: We have a lot of masks, and a lot of attitude.
Lou: Everything is changing all the time; we don't even know what's going on each night.
MRR: Les Buddhists Leningrad!
Tundra: It's like you, when you decide each morning, "Should I put on my red underwear, or my black underwear?"
Lou: Am I a marine, am I ugly, well, I'm so ugly all the time. It's all kid stuff, you know? Canada! Paris! Policeman!
Tundra: Taxi Driver! Carpenter!
MRR: Okay, so what about the Canadian punk scene? Is it better?
Pony: We don't care about the Canadian scene.
Tundra: Nah, it's a world scene.
MRR: Well I, for one, am getting ready for the Canadian Invasion.
Lou: Noooo!
Mingo: No Canadian invasion.
Lou: Canadians are like beavers.
Pony: I like watching TV and that's all.
Lou: We love Canadian animals, but not Canadian bands.
MRR: Okay, anything else to add?
Lou: We are kids and we like sissy things.
Mingo: I'm going to go have a drink, because I am an alcoholic.

www.lesgeorgesleningrad.net

Rodent Popsicle Records



Interview with Bill Toxic Narcotic

by Pat FNS

MRR: Why did you start Rodent Popsicle Records?

Bill: Basically we [Toxic Narcotic] started it because we wanted to self-release our record. No one else would do it for us. We weren't that good when we started. There were a few labels around but none of them were interested, so we decided to do it ourselves. We came up with a joke name for the label, which stuck. Then we did a couple records for other bands that we knew that no one would put out either. They paid for the records themselves and just put it out under our label name as a communal thing, and they would use the PO Box we had. In most cases it was still DIY, the bands would do all of the work and covering the bills. We weren't advertising in any way. Our existence was basically in thought, a PO Box, and a pile of stickers. Then we started to put out more records. I actually ran the label for years before I really started to take it seriously. Like putting out some Toxic Narcotic records, a couple August Spies records, we did the first Unseen record. Just a few local bands like that, nothing much. I guess around maybe 2000, I started to take it seriously.

MRR: So what was the record that really made you realize that running the label could work?

Bill: I put the Toxic 89-99 in a nice full color jewel box CD and a full color LP. It was the first real deal record.

MRR: It didn't have a photocopied cover.

Bill: Yeah, we had done photocopied 7"s till then. Or we did a few CDs that were those really cheap ones that are packaged like a 7". It seemed like DIY punk was more popular than it is today. We just started to move a lot of records.

MRR: You were like "Holy shit, we sold a lot!"

Bill: Might as well start helping friends out.

MRR: How many were pressed for the first pressing of the 89-99 record?

Bill: Just a 1000 of each.

MRR: And they sold out?

Bill: Yeah.

MRR: How quick?

Bill: Oh, right away. We've done about 10,000 CDs and 2,000 LPs. And it's only been three years. I guess you could say it helped propel the label. People got to know the name. You could say that Toxic Narcotic is the largest-selling band on the label, but since then we've put out bands that are just as well known.

MRR: Personally and professionally, do you prefer CDs or vinyl?

Bill: What CDs are good for are new bands. It's close to impossible to sell vinyl for new bands that aren't touring. Anything on vinyl is hard; it's hard to send vinyl to a club to get a show on tour. As a vinyl purist, I love my records to be on vinyl, but not every full-length on Rodent Popsicle has a vinyl release. I'm starting to approach wanting to do that more. It costs $1,300 to press 1,000 CDs, full color. It costs $2,000 to press 1,000 records. And considering if I put out a band and sell ten LPs out of spending $2,000, that means that the next band doesn't get put out, because I won't have the money. Vinyl is just hard to move nowadays. I noticed, for Toxic, we sell all of our vinyl on the road. I might sell ten to a distributor here, and ten to a distributor there, but when we go on the road people seem to want to buy vinyl. I guess where I'm at with my label now is, the harder the band works for themselves, the harder I can work for them. The harder-working bands I can do vinyl for, because they can move it. I'm probably going to do vinyl versions of The Midnight Creeps and the Tommy and The Terrors full-lengths that we just did. Because both of those full-lengths are really well produced. We've been recording with this guy in Allston, Richard Marr. It's a basement studio but the guy's a genius so everything that comes out of there sounds really pro for very little money. It's the kind of thing where I'm going to attempt to put more full lengths on vinyl as time goes on. It's basically just a juggle of money. There are a lot of labels where, honestly, I can't see where they get the money. Picture disks for every release, full-color ads everywhere.

MRR: Because the money comes from somewhere else.

Bill: Somebody's got to be a trust fund kid or something. Cause I'm poor, I pay my rent, my teeth are falling out, and I spend all of my money putting bands out.

MRR: Like RCA taking out full color ads in the *Boston Herald*?

Bill: I'm not even talking about them, I'm talking about punk labels that are large. Nothing against them but, like BYO, Epitaph, Fat Records: full color ads in every magazine. Now, I know how much they cost. Even if you get a deal on running them monthly. Just their advertising budget per month is more money than I've ever spent ever in my whole life, ever. You could buy a house for their monthly advertising budget.

MRR: Well maybe they took that risk. Maybe they scraped up the money and took a risk. I don't think so, but…

Bill: I wish I could do a picture disk for every release and a dozen different shirts for every band. Have the crazy catalog that some of these labels have, but I just can't afford it.

MRR: And I think in the long run it will work out better. You're taking your time and in the end you'll go the distance and be better off in the long run. So what is it that keeps you motivated? I mean, you're not raking it in so it's not the money.

Bill: I don't think I've broken even on a release in a long time. Anyone reading this knows that I don't put out bands because they are popular. At least that's not the goal. I'm not writing letters to my favorite band asking to put out their record on my label. If that ever happened that would be cool but, as you can tell, I don't have a singles collection from some huge band. I'm not bugging the Varukers or Chaos UK to put out their next full-length.

MRR: So what is it then?

Bill: It's mostly my buddies. Friends, bands I meet on the road. Sometimes it's bands I feel, like us, have been underdogged. Whatever is hip in the scene now, we're not part of. A lot of bands that are on the label, no one would give 'em a break, so I do.

MRR: But it's not because they are not good?

Bill: No, it's got nothing to do with that.

MRR: They're great, they just don't get any press?

Bill: Right now punk is fashionable. If you

don't have a nice mohawk on the cover, your record won't sell. You know that there is a fashion thing going on. Everyone in my band has looked that way, but I don't care anymore. If you notice the one guy with tattoos has a short sleeve shirt on in the band photo, and the one with the mohawk head is turned to the right so you can see his mohawk, you know how this goes.

MRR: It's marketing.

Bill: It's sad that it happened to punk, though. There's no way in every one of these band photos, someone is yelling and that one member just happened to be looking that way when they took the picture

MRR: Oh yeah, and it's perfect. Just freshly cut.

Bill: I mean certain labels, every single one of their record covers has charged guys on the front. And you also know that what I put out is a total variety of music. Some of the bands are ex-punkers playing rock, some of it's crust and total brutal shit, some of its street punk.

MRR: Posi-core?

Bill: Yeah, maybe a little. Thumbs Up! is pretty positive.

MRR: What are the things you really look for to put a band out on your label?

Bill: DIY attitude, touring, and hard working. Bands that are like "No one will put out our record, but were going on tour anyway." I've met a lot of bands like that. "No one's hooking it up for us." Hey, I'll help you out.

MRR: They also have to fit onto a genre, right? I mean you're not going to put out a country band.

Bill: Well, if it's punks playing country, I would. How I would define my label is: I wouldn't put out a rock record but I would put out a punk's, doing rock. If you look at bands I did, like the first Crash And Burn record, Fast Actin' Fuses, a lot of these bands are all from old hardcore bands just playing what they want.

MRR: So what do you have for distribution?

Bill: All the basic internet sites like Revelation, Interpunk, all those guys help me out. I do a lot of trading. It's an old DIY thing.

MRR: Like with other bands and labels?

Bill: Yeah, I mean the whole thing about having the bin at your show is about trading your stuff to other people and then selling it on the road. We've always carried that distro around with us and most of what's in there is because they would trade with me. That's why when you see our distro at a show, we don't have Black Flag records or anything like that, it's just all new underground stuff that I traded with someone else. Oh yeah, we'll take 20 copies of your release. We could pay you, but we could take 50 if you trade. So we do a lot of that. It definitely helps smaller bands. People were trading singles before The Beatles were a band. People were trading records between England and the US. That's how The Beatles were influenced.

MRR: Trading 50 records with a band is great but it doesn't get rid of 2,000 CDs. Do you have any bigger distro? Ebollution?

Bill: They distribute for us. All the Newbury Comics stores help with the local bands that sell well here.

MRR: You do Bull Moose?

Bill: I haven't actually dealt with them yet. I called them up once about dealing with them and I guess they were going through some changes.

MRR: The distribution process is pretty involved, I mean you've got to call, send out stuff.

Bill: The best part is when they just don't even answer you. That's my favorite. [Laughter]. You know "We don't like your stuff so much, that we'll just pretend you never sent it." I think distribution is one thing I am not happy with yet. I'm not covered, I need more.

MRR: Even after the number of releases you've done, you would think someone would pick you up. These aren't your first couple of releases. I mean, you're a real business.

Bill: I've run ads in every punk magazine and I still can't get any help.

MRR: What about Europe?

Bill: Same thing. A couple. Europe is big on trades. Here is a perfect example: To buy a record, in a lot of countries in Europe, especially the Eastern Block, is a week's pay. But to trade me ten of some bootleg Doom LP from Poland, it's even. To make a thousand records here is the same to make 1,000 records there. It's relative. But to send me ten dollars, is expensive, so we do a lot of trades. We encourage bootlegging, at least for my own band; other people can do their own thing. When we were on tour in the Eastern Block everyone sells cassettes. Everyone's got these bins that they sell at shows, with bootlegs of all your favorite bands. All US hardcore and punk. Nobody can afford the records. You can run a tape distro if you have a CD player and a tape deck.

MRR: And at least break even?

Bill: Yeah. I mean how much do you make? You bootleg me to what? To get drunk that night? I saw bootleg Toxic Narcotic t-shirts and patches and cassettes in places like Mexico on tour. I'm honored you know, cool. In Europe the punk ethic is more, well, politics are more important. The line between selling out and not selling out is very specific, there's no gray area. In the US scene there is more of a gray area. Like its OK to be on this major label, but only for certain bands.

MRR: Yeah, its OK to be on this major, but not if they sell your video to MTV.

Bill: I think if you're selling shoes, you're a sellout bitch, end of story. Some of my friends would be offended by that, but fuck 'em. Warped Tour is selling shoes for the man.

MRR: We won't mention who it is, we all know who it is.

Bill: There are a lot of Boston bands on it.

MRR: Do they give you credit?

Bill: Who?

MRR: A lot of these bands started on your label.

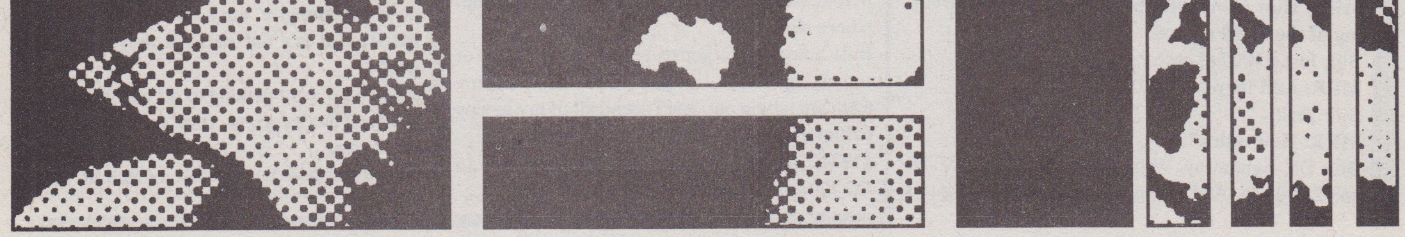
Bill: Well, I'm happy that anyone gets popular.

MRR: Do they share the wealth? Are they selling your records on tour?

Bill: No. But that's all right. I'm not selling their records on tour either. I hope my buddies make it and I hope everyone does what they want. At the end of the day, it doesn't matter, as long as they're happy. For me I can choose to not want to support them.

MRR: But it's not a personal thing.

Bill: Not at all. I'm friends with all of the guys in the bands. But, I have to make the choices for Toxic and what my label wants to do. There are bands on my label that have no qualms with selling out. That's



...AND THE INDUSTRY ISN'T SELLING OUT PUNK: PUNKS ARE SELLING OUT PUNKS.

not an issue to them. It's all relative to what you say. You never heard The Dropkick Murphys say that they were down with DIY punk and would never do that, so who cares if they're getting big. But, for example, we kind of have a different attitude. If Toxic changed our tune people would yell sellout and I could understand it. And the industry isn't selling out punk: punks are selling out punks. Brody Armstrong didn't have to be on the Rolling Stone cover, she had a choice. And I guess the question about keeping me going, I feel like my band gets stepped on, underdogged, and not given any credit. We don't get a lot of the cool shows, unless I book them myself. No one invites us to play a show, unless I book it. You know, you see that Toxic Narcotic plays with all the cool bands, because I had to book it myself. None of the booking agencies ever invite us to open for their national [bands]. We are not cool with that clique. Here's an example: We just toured with The Circle Jerks and GBH on the West Coast. Us and GBH are labelmates on Go-Kart and that's why we got on the tour. I don't want to open for national crappy bands, but I respect GBH and Circle Jerks. And there are very few bands that are that big that still have respect for, where I can go out and open for a 3,000-people shows and play with bands that I like. In the overall scheme of things, they still have the respect that they deserve. We were slated to be on the tour on the East Coast. We were pretty much guaranteed to be on it. GBH were using our drum kit. We were on the tour. Politics got us kicked for two kind of poppy bands that are part of the booking agency that books Circle Jerks and GBH.

MRR: So you only got the West Coast tour.

Bill: Yeah, that's why were not on the East Coast. We were on it. GBH got all pissed off, they were making phone calls, but they don't really have a say. The booking agent's huge; they deal with much bigger bands than GBH. So we couldn't even get on the Palladium show and there are like 20 bands, 'cause the people that book that never ask us to do shows.

MRR: What, they don't like you or something?

Bill: I've emailed over there and asked to get on the bill. I mean we draw as good as any of the other bands that open all of the time.

MRR: So take GBH as an example. Do you think once you get to a point you no longer have control over the bands that you play with?

Bill: Oh of course, they told me that. They said it didn't matter if they wanted us on or not. We were supposed to have it because of the Go-Kart thing. Then I get a call "Oh no, you're not going to get the shows. We gave it to these other poppy bands that have a lot of money behind them."

MRR: Are they on the Go-Kart label?

Bill: Oh no, Go-Kart got shafted. Go-Kart had two bands that were supposed to open. Us and another, and neither of us got it. Now Go-Kart, they have some large distribution, but they are just a couple of guys in a little office.

MRR: They have an office, huh?

Bill: That's what I've heard.

MRR: Oh, you've never been there?

Bill: No. I heard it's too small to have visitors.

MRR: I noticed lately you've been putting out records from bands outside of Boston.

Bill: Yeah its part of the whole expanding thing. Now that we're taking the label seriously, we're not just a Boston thing.

MRR: Are there any other reasons besides expansion?

Bill: You know what it is? To keep the DIY ethic alive in punk rock, one thing that is very important is family. If there is a network of bands across the country that I can help, then they can help me. For example, I'm putting out a record from a band called The Escaped from Portland [Oregon]. Good band. Two other bands from Boston both needed shows out there. Who did they call? The Escaped. Got some great shows. Portland, Eugene, Seattle, and that whole area. Because they were Rodent Popsicle bands, too. Now they are all friends. Now, when The Escaped comes out here, all these bands return the favor. If you're not part of the corporate world of booking agents and clubs that don't know your name, you need the help. All the early Toxic Narcotic tours when, for ten years, we just drove around the country by ourselves, calling other bands going "Hey, I'm not going to call the club, you hook me up with where you think the best show would be." Because you know your town. If you didn't know Boston you might want to play the Middle East or Axis. Or you might find out that somebody could hook you up with a good hall show, where you're going to get paid more. They know the better venue.

Sometimes I do shows in Providence and they come off better than Boston. If it's a bigger band coming through, we just do a Providence show, as the local all ages. And I know that there is all ages and booze in the same room. So drinky bands and all-ages bands, you know what I'm saying? You can't do that in Boston. Like the last time we did Chaos UK through here, which would be an example of a bigger band, but not in a corporate way. We did it at Bill's Bar and at The Met in Providence, which was incredibly fun. All the Bostonians that were of-age went to that show so they could drink. Half the room was full of Boston. All my friends were there because they could drink and it was still an all-age show. For me, the atmosphere was better. Someone might read this and say well, you don't need drinking to make a punk show cool, and that's fine. But with these lineups, the audience that likes Chaos UK is a drinking crowd.

Overall though, the great thing about hardcore punk is that you always know who to contact. Like if you're going to Pittsburgh, you call Submachine, because they will hook it up. And they did hook it up and we became friends. And now it's 14 years later and we laugh about those first shows that we played when we sucked. I mean I was out in Seattle, and Seattle has a larger crust/politically motivated scene there, which makes me happy because it's not so much here. And all the bands there were wondering about all the Boston bands that are out on Warped Tour, and why we weren't. And they were like "It's so awesome you guys never did anything like that." That's the kind of stuff that keeps you going.

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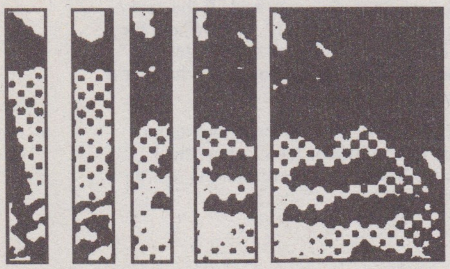
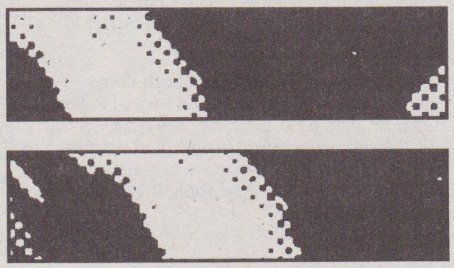
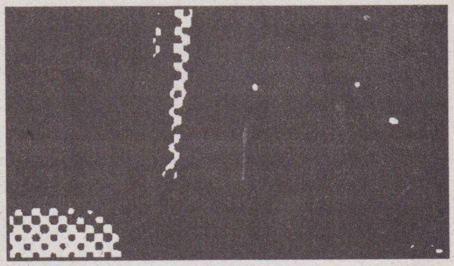
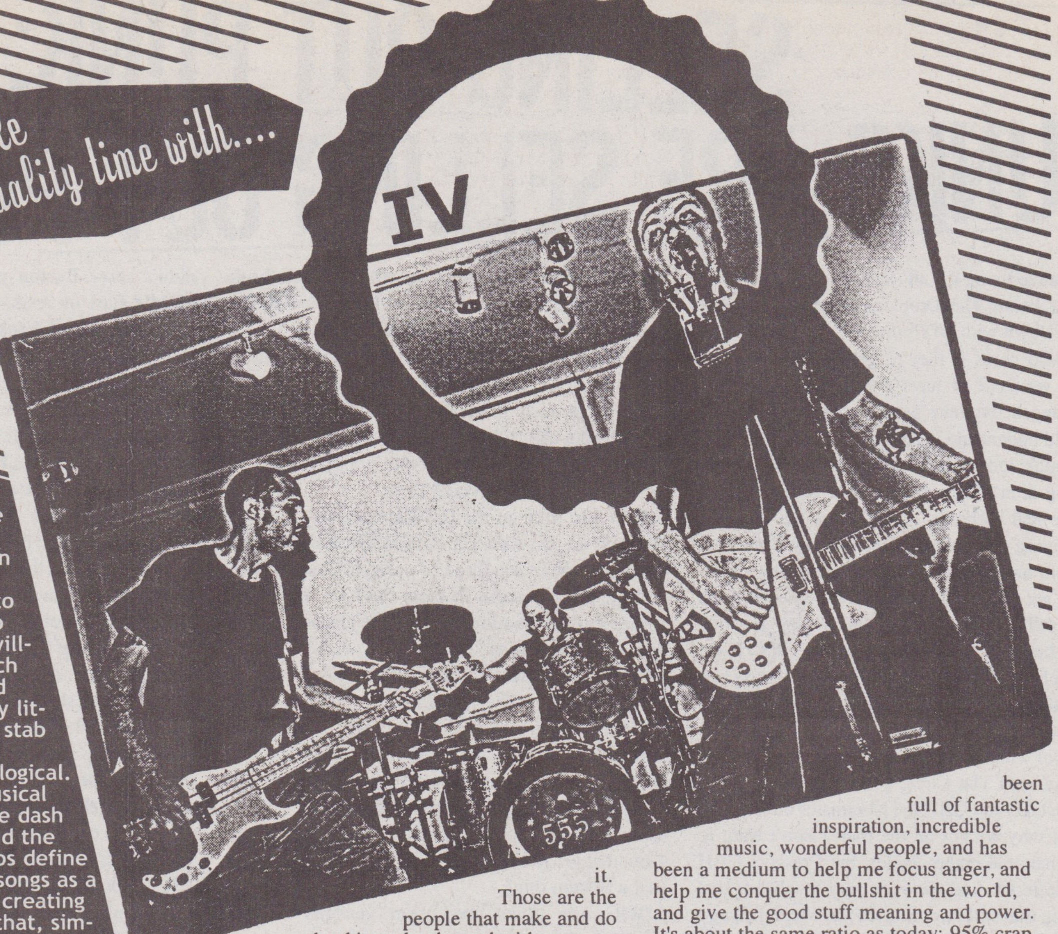




FOURTH ROTOR

Spend a little quality time with....



FOURTH ROTOR are a three piece from Chicago, Illinois. Formed in late 2000, they promptly began to dole out wake up calls to anyone willing to listen. Each word Douglas and Jake sing is a tiny little shiv taking a stab at the mundane, ridiculous, and illogical. Their angular musical style, with a little dash of HUSKER DU and the MINUTEMEN, helps define their intelligent songs as a sincere effort to creating a diverse sound that, simply put, rocks the shit out of everything. Douglas Ward, Jake Levee, and the lovely Kammy Swift (formerly of bands like 8 BARK, V REVERSE, & AMBITION MISSION) are the three people that comprise this trio of malcontents, and I am the lucky, lucky gal that calls them friends. Interview by Annie, photos by Ricky Adam & Shawn Scallen.

Q: Considering that the median age of most punk rockers is somewhere in the teens, you guys are kind of old. But you're still pretty punk. How has your attitude towards the genre adapted over the years?

D: Well, I agree that most people who listen to punk music, or who call themselves 'punks' are in their teens. But as has always been the case, the people who are 'creating' it: running the labels, writing the zines, touring in the bands, promoting the shows, etc., have always been from a wide range of ages, from teens to gray hairs. What that says to me is that the people who get it; who understand what diy punk is and who feel it is so important that they integrate it with their lives, they KEEP doing it. And whether they discover diy punk when they're in their teens or in their 50s, it doesn't matter; they stay in it. Those are the people that make and do the things that keep the ideas, ideals, and music going. The rest of the 'punks' in their teens that flit-in and flit-out of it, well, perhaps they're just trying out a fad, or playing 'punk' for a while. This stuff isn't for everybody: it's too intense, nor should it be. But for those people who 'get it'; they're in it for life.

K: I got into punk when I was about 16 or 17. My attitude was that punk was for all the people like me...angry, alienated, socially unaccepted people that didn't fit in to the mainstream. You were punk if you looked at the world and saw all the things that were wrong with it. For a while I was just one of the people that went to shows. I wasn't in a band, didn't do a zine, or anything. Later when I started getting involved with bands, zines, putting on shows, then I began to see the positive, community-building aspect of punk as well.

D: Speaking for myself, I've been doing punk bands since 1984, when I was 16; I'm 35 now. And d.i.y. punk has always been full of bullshit, and crappy people, and contradictions, and self-destructive negativism, and sellouts. At the same time, it has always been full of fantastic inspiration, incredible music, wonderful people, and has been a medium to help me focus anger, and help me conquer the bullshit in the world, and give the good stuff meaning and power. It's about the same ratio as today: 95% crap, 5% gold. Instead of 'burning out' on punk/hardcore/d.i.y., and coming to a dead end, it has continued to provide me with what I think are new challenges, and new outlets for my creativity and expression. For me: it's not over, there's more to do. But things have changed: 'punk', as we all know, has achieved a level of popular exposure that all but erased the value of the word. The legions of 'punk fans' that equate the word with the commercial, poppy, rock star, music business 'punk' bands out there have all but kicked the shit out of the word. But the great thing is that real d.i.y., the "we do it because we need to do it" show-in-the-basement, lose-money-on-the-tour, make-it-weird-to-challenge-people types are STILL out there, truly, underground, under the mainstream co-opted 'punk' scene. And for all those long-time d.i.y. diehards, and all the new / young people who 'get it', that's where they go. That's where the new stuff is getting made, and that's where punk, or whatever it is now, thrives.

Q: TOTALLY! Who gives a hoot about bands that sellout or their hypocritical actions?? The real underground is still thrv-

thriving, and it's never going to be uprooted. The "lifers" care too much to let it swirl down the crapper.

J: My attitude on punk has been almost the same since I first got into it and I've continued having peers who have also remained interested in it, so I feel like I've always had people to relate to. Although I have noticed the fact that I am and feel older than a lot of people at punk shows, I continue to meet people who are genuinely into it and people who are just going through a phase. I guess being a little older has helped me sort those people out. There are a lot of older punks everywhere doing a lot of cool shit for their local scene.

K: I don't think my attitude has changed that much, other than the fact that I've been around for a while so I have more life experience & I don't think of things in quite the black-and-white terms I used to when I was younger. I don't really think of myself as being "punk despite my age", in fact I don't think too much about people's ages. The dividing line for me is between the people who "get it", and those who don't. By "getting it", I mean those people of any age who see punk as a true alternative, forever outside the mainstream, and much, much more than a style of music.

Q: Is it necessary to completely immerse yourself in your scene, then? Personally, I think it would be hard not to if you've been a part of it for a long time, but there are people who aren't into creating art or music. How is a spectator still a participant?

K: True, there are different degrees of participation, not everyone wants to be an artist or a musician, put out a zine, do a radio show, or anything like that. Some people don't do any of those things--they are just drawn to the scene & the views it represents, they like to go to shows, or whatever. In my view, anyone who shows up and hangs out is a participant, & is part of the community. Because obviously there's something that drew them to it--otherwise they'd be at a Blink 182 show or something. As far as immersion goes, I don't live, sleep, eat & breathe the scene. I've got many other things (and people) in my life that have nothing to do with d.i.y. or punk rock. I try to have a "big picture" view of the world and what's in it, and I think I'd find that hard to do if I lived exclusively within a subculture.

J: A spectator is 100% involved and in a way there are no spectators. When we play shows, especially out of town, I feel like I'm a spectator to the local people, and spaces. I guess the bands and the crowd feed energy off of each other, at least at an ideal show. You're both there to observe each other. Showing up to shows and supporting diy bands is in my opinion is being involved. It's the same energy only on different ends.

D: Being totally immersed, and defining yourself by your involvement are two different things. I think it's critical to avoid the trap of hanging your entire identity as a person on one thing, in this case, d.i.y. punk rock. As "totally immersed" as I am with what I do in d.i.y./underground/punk, It's not who I am, its just a major thing that I do. As much as we'd like, most people, (about 99.999999%) on this planet have never heard of punk rock. If you don't apply your ideas and ideals from the punk rock part of your life into the rest of it, and ignore the rest of, you're missing the point.

Q: Your songs are soaked to the gills with socio-political insights. Have you ever played to a room of obviously bored people who don't "get it"? Do you see it as a challenge to educate them and maybe win a few over to the punk side or do you feel it's a lost cause?

J: Yes. There have been several shows where I have no idea what we are doing there and I can tell that the folks there have no idea what we are doing. At alot of shows with a younger crowd you can tell that they want something familiar, something they can almost predict. It's never a lost cause on the level that we're going to do what we do anyway. Alot of kids at these shows fit into the "just going through a phase" category or are still going through their intro to punk which commercial radio has to offer, which we would never consider punk. It's also very comical at times at these shows when kids have no idea how to respond. They have no idea what to say or even if they should or should not clap. So for comfort reasons we end up getting ignored.

D: If we confuse some people, or they just don't like it, it's no loss to us. Hopefully, the ones that are confused might translate that feeling into asking why they felt weird about not having their expectations met. But you can't hit people over the head with literal speeches and such, at least not **FOURTH ROTOR**. Some bands have that ability, some don't. When one form of message delivery becomes a cliché, you have to switch gears and attack the problem in a different way. So, we try to lead people to what we're doing, and let them take it or leave it

K: Yes, we have played some shows where it just totally went over people's heads, or in one ear and out the other, or where it just felt like we were playing into a black hole or a void. Sometimes it seems to be the fact that people are younger and/or they don't have experienced ears, and our music isn't that accessible-sounding, so they just have no idea what they're hearing or how to listen to it. We might not win those folks over at first, but maybe there'll be that one kid...and he (or she) will go away thinking, hmm, I never heard anything like that before...and it'll affect them somehow. Or maybe not. The other situation we've run into is where people only like music that sounds just like the music they already know about and are familiar with, and we don't fit the genre, so they're not interested. That I consider to be a lost cause, because we're a weird band, and they don't want weird and different, they want the stuff they already know they like.

Q: Jake, the precise and mathematical music of this band is a lot different than your previous bands that were a lot more straightforward, and melodic even. Was it hard to adjust to the difference in sound?

J: It wasn't really hard because it was something I wanted to do. Of course I had to get used to playing with other people but I knew what I was getting myself into and what kind of stuff we would be playing. I was into the idea of doing something that would be different for me. At first I had no idea what to expect. I only knew that Douglas and Kammy had been playing together and did not have a band. I had known both of them for a long time and knew that they were serious about playing and I really wanted to hook up with people who wanted to tour and who had the same ideas about being in a band that I did. I had not picked up a bass for a couple of years so the whole thing was refreshing to me. As far as playing music that is timed differently, it's one of those things that you either feel or don't feel. It all seemed to click so it was a fun different, not a difficult different.

Q: Considering the band's aforementioned description, how does FOURTH ROTOR go about writing a song? Are they written together, or brought to the

table by one person? Please describe the process.

K: How do we go about writing a song? Very slowly (ha-ha).

J: Sometimes someone has the majority to a song and sometimes just a small part that needs help being turned into a song. We all bring this to practice and play things over and over until one of us starts doing something different. Then we paste some random thoughts together and then you have a song.

D: That's pretty much it. Once the ideas get to a practice, they develop pretty quickly. The hard part is coming up with them in the first place. Often I'll do some demo-ing of an idea on the computer, with MIDI drum tracks and real bass & guitar over it, and then I'll bring that to practice.

Q: Douglas, what's a Woodland Taco?

D: (It's the title to one of our songs) Nothing. Actually, that title came up back when Kammy and I were practicing with another bassist in pre-FOURTH ROTOR days. We had been working out the song, and it has this little chirpy sounds riff, that someone said sounded like a bird in the woods. We were talking about as we were taking a break at the taco joint across the street. So, it became the temporary song name. Later, in Fourth Rotor, when we were re-working that song, the name was weird, and stuck, and I used it as a metaphor in the songs lyrics.

Q: I know that in the past, Douglas, your luck with vans has not been particularly blessed. Yet, Kammy's van seems to be holding up very well. With all the touring you do, how do you keep it running well? Do you all split the cost or is Kammy footing the bill? She better not be, you jerks.

K: The Fortress is indeed a great van. It has about 140,000 miles on it right now. I/we try to maintain it as much as possible by doing the usual routine maintenance things. Generally I've been covering the cost of repairs myself, and Douglas & I have split the cost of a few major repairs. We decided we're going to keep this van going as long as we can, by continuing to repair & replace everything we hope to make it last a long, long time.

D: When on the road, the band pays for any repairs, it if can. If not, we generally split it.

Q: How are you able to tour so much? What arrangements have you made with your employers so that you are able to travel frequently?

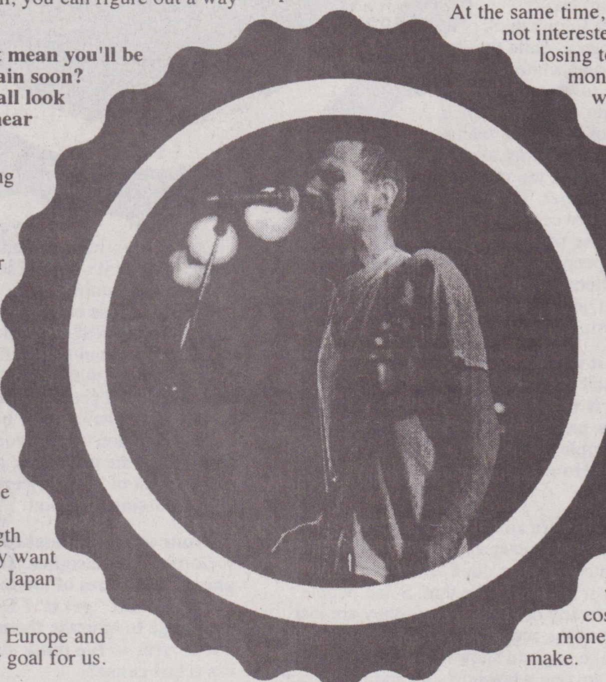
J: I work for myself most of the year painting houses and when that slows down I work for a friend of mine who is a carpenter. So I can pretty much tour whenever, meaning I have no boss to check with. I've been doing the same kind of work for a while now always knowing it's something I can leave when I want and come back to.

K: The company I work for (a large printing company) has been pretty flexible about letting me take time off. In 2000, I actually took a three-month leave of absence to go traveling, and they were cool with that. I don't think they really like the fact that I take so much time off, but they're willing to put up with it because I've been with the company for a while and the alternative would be to have to hire somebody else.

D: Since High School, I've always tried to figure out how to do things for a living that would allow me to walk away from and pick it up later. So, I've done live sound, then got into computer desktop publishing, late electronic prepress, and did 3rd shift/graveyard shift. Chicago's a big printing town, and lots of places were always desperate to get good people to work midnight to 8 am. So, when it came time to tour, my employers were always like "please come back" instead of "you're fired". I've kept that flexibility going; for the last 7 years I've been doing digital audio mastering (MaximumMac Studios) for local bands and labels, and also do some web development consulting crap. So, I work for myself, and can schedule things when I want. It's a fortunate situation to be in. Basically, if you want to do something bad enough, you can figure out a way to do it.

Q: So does that mean you'll be heading out again soon? Where can we all look for you in the near future?

D: We're working on touring the West Coast U.S. in April 2004, and then another one to Alaska in September. Our friends in **THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB** did this recently, and gave us the idea.



K: After tour, we want to record another full-length album. We really want to go to Europe, Japan & Australia too.

D: Yes! Touring Europe and Japan is a major goal for us.

Q. So you are planning to tour Alaska soon? Why did you choose this location? It's beautiful, I know, but do you expect to play many shows up there?

D: We hope to get 4 or 5 in Alaska itself. Its sort of nuts, but it's an adventure. If we cared about impressing the important scenesters", we wouldn't tour there. But we don't. We'd rather go somewhere offbeat, where people are going to glad we came, and we can see more of the world. It's going to be fantastic.

Q: Well, I am very jealous. Even if all your shows fell through up there, it will be the most beautiful trip.

D: We've already connected to some great people, and hopefully it will all come together. It wouldn't be the worst place to be stuck with some time on your hands, however.

Q: Describe your hobbies outside of the band.

J: I do Pirate radio out of the north side of Chicago. I get a bag of beer and a bag of records and a blank tape and record the shows so I have mix tapes to listen to as I drive. We're going to start posting my shows up on our website soon so look out.

Q: I know you have been asked about this a lot, but explain why you make all of your music available for online download? Do you feel it is more crucial that people have access to it than it's importance as a tour funding tactic, or some other form of band income?

D: This band isn't a business. The point of recording and releasing music is to let people who are interested in us have our music. At the same time, we're not interested in losing tons of money. So, we charge for our CDs, which cost us money to make.

K: It doesn't really cost us much to put music files on our web site for people to download. The benefit to us is that somebody might hear our stuff, who otherwise wouldn't. Also, it just plain feels good to put something good up there for free, and not give a damn if we get money from it. A lot of bands are so chintzy with making sure they get every penny. We don't care--if people like it, it's there for the taking. If they download a song and like it, maybe they'll come see us play. Maybe they'll buy the real CD if they like it enough that they want to own it. If they download a

song and hate it, then they'll probably just trash the file, so there's no loss to us. Yes, we do charge for our CD's because they cost us $$ to make, and we sell them basically to make $$ to put gas in the van and food in our mouths. We don't give a lot of thought to the idea of "making back all the expenses it took us to put out the record."

Q: But how do you feel about the art work of an album? Is it as important as the music?

D: The art work isn't as important as the music, because we're a band that makes music--we're not visual artists. In fact, the way we think of the CD, or any recordings, is that it is secondary to us playing live. It's like this, #1) The live show is what we are, #2) the CD is just souvenir of the live show, #3) the art work is just a necessity to wrap around the CD. That said, once you're there to make the art, we try to make it interesting and relevant.

Q: I agree with the idea that the live show is the most important aspect of a band. Many times a band I have been astounded by live aren't as fantastic when I put the record on when I get home. There's something about the loud noise, the sweat, the energy... something that rarely shows through in recorded music. There are a few bands, however....

J: I think art work is very important, and goes hand in hand with the record, if you're into it. There are some records that I think are great that have blank album covers, but I'm so into the record, that I think it's appropriate....

Q: Yea! Like the FUCKFACE album.

J: The FUCKFACE record is God. Art and all. ...if you love a record, chances are you'll like the art. If you don't like a record, you might not even understand the art.

K: The images that appear on "Seize" mostly come from the German submarine U-505 at Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, and a few images are from other sources. The images are submarines and parts of submarines (instruments, gauges, etc.), and they have some effects applied to them so they're not totally clear and sharp. The effect (we hope) is to convey a feeling of mystery, of being secretly underwater, or something like that. It goes along with us being an underground, in-the-basement type band.

D: That's as "deep" as it gets. Other than that, our CD/LP art is just that, art.

Q: See, here's where I may disagree, Douglas. For me, the artwork is as an important factor in punk as the music. Much about it is a visual expression of creativity, and the artwork that accompanies a record gives a lot of insight into how the band perceives their own music. However, the lovely thing about punk, that also makes my argument a moot point, is that there really are no rules, and that each participant is free to take from and give back as much as they like.

D: Well, I guess what I'm saying is, that I'm not a visual artist. Sure, we put thought into it, but it's not the point, or the main thing, of the record. Perhaps our artwork does provide the insight you mention, but ultimately, it's up to the viewer/record owner/record listener/whatever to draw meaning, or not, from the record art.

Q: Has all of your music been self-released? Why have you chosen that path?

D: Well, to date, "all" is one CD. We self released it for a couple of reasons. One was that we didn't want someone else to lose money on it. You see, we had a lot of people very graciously offer to release it for us on their labels. But the problem with that is they would have invested money into it, and would naturally want to earn it back, which is totally understandable. We, however, didn't want to feel like we were obligated to "sell" our CDs. We didn't want to hype it, hawk it, or push it. We wanted to be able to maintain our attitude of "if you want it, here it is, otherwise, we don't give a fuck". We have no ambition to sell CDs. That attitude is in conflict with most labels, even d.i.y. labels business plan. So, we did it ourselves, and have been very happy about it. The other reason we released it ourselves was that we were still figuring out how we wanted to represent ourselves, what our outlook was, and how we wanted to do things. By releasing it ourselves, the three of had to be 100% involved in thinking the whole process through, which worked out great. If one of us had talked to a friend who did a label, sent them art work and the masters, and then a few weeks later the CD came out, we would have felt a little detached from it, you know? Instead, we have this first release that feels like OURS. We are releasing the LP version with Council Records, but this works well with our outlook, because Council's feelings about the release pretty much match our own. From the front page of their web site, it says, "I suppose this is also the part where I try to convince you to purchase my new 'units'. I could give a fuck if you want to buy these records or not. I am in this for one reason and one reason only - to make available music I feel is important and relevant - period. And if that is indeed what it is - everything will work itself out. I will not insult your intelligence by attempting to write some witty commentary that pains the imagination comparing the Dearborn S.S. record to The James Gang or Led Zeppelin. Take a fucking chance. Live a little." Yeah, that's exactly right, that fits us pretty good.

Q: It's a beautiful attitude to adopt. You guys make me happy.

D: Right on. It's a difficult concept to explain to a lot of people who've never thought of it before. I guess it's another aspect of our "message"; thet this is a legit and viable way of thinking about what expression is.

Q. What's your favorite thing about Chicago?

D: Hard say, there's so much. We've always known that its a great place for a band to be from: there are a LOT of people and shows, and resources, not to mention the fact the being so centrally located, a) every band tours through here, and b) its easy to get pretty far when doing weekend tours. As we've gone around the country, and played a lot of cool places, we're continuously reminded of just how good we have it here.

Please go see FOURTH ROTOR's live show this spring / early summer! You will not regret it. And request the song "Flim Flam Man"!!

555

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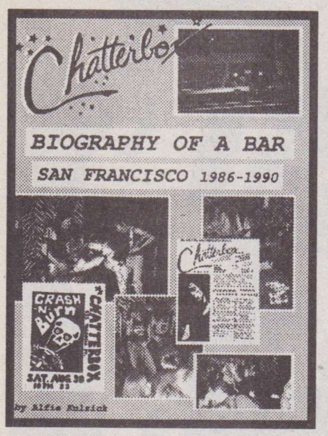


Chatterbox: Biography of a Bar: San Francisco 1986-1990
Alfie Kulzick

The Chatterbox was a classic dive bar in San Francisco during a somewhat confused period of indie and punk rock, when hints of metal and glam were mixing into the scene, people were growing their hair long again, with grunge on the horizon but quite a phenom. Johnny Thunders was the prototype and faux zebra provided backdrop onstage. Guys wore muscle shirts and frizz was everywhere.

Alfie Kulzick was the owner of the Chatterbox and this is her book. It's obviously a labor of love, practically a coffee table book, and a glossy paged affair. What she lacks in writing skills she makes up in pluckiness and authenticity. While their biggest claim to fame Nirvana was a no show for their only scheduled appearance at the club, the club was never about fame or fortune. Chatterbox was a neighborhood San Francisco thing, and local indie music dominated.

There are a lot of great photographs in this book, thanks to Steve Shiotsu who contributed a lot of them. Along with the history of the club, Ms Kulzick accompanies the photos with plenty of stories. The book does a great job of harkening back to the innocent and fun times of a tight knit community. The end of the book has a full chronological listing of every band that every played there (with show fliers sprinkled throughout). Sadly, the Chatterbox ultimately shut down primarily because of financial reasons.

Footnote: The Chatterbox became the Chameleon afterwards which was also a well loved club. It is now Amnesia, an upscale bar.
-Henry Yu

We Are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism
Edited by Notes from Nowhere
520 pages $16.99
Verso
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606
www.versobooks.com

The first part of this book that I read was the back cover, which says, "This isn't a book, it's a brick with which to shatter cynicism." Next, I looked at the press release that came with it, where it says, "Read this book before it comes through your window!" So I read it right away, and sure enough, it hasn't come through my window, so far. On the other hand, I think I still do have some of my cynicism.

Likewise, aside from the hype, the book does a good job of living up to its promises, but I also think it leaves some important ground uncovered that needs to be covered.

The editors have done an impressive job of collecting five hundred pages of short first-hand accounts of activism against economic globalization, privatization, free trade agreements, corporate greed and so on from around the world, and tying it together with short essays explaining what connects these things into a movement and what its positive, visionary side looks like. By piling up one story after another—from Chiapas, Nigeria, Britain, Thailand, Seattle, Prague, South Africa, and on and on—they gradually paint a complex, detailed and sensitive picture of something that makes sense together and works differently from international movements in the past. This makes it a good book for people who are new to the globalization movement (or anticapitalist movement, as the editors prefer). I would also recommend it to people who have been involved in these things because they'll probably find something new. There are several serious pieces about the neighborhood assemblies in Argentina, for instance, something I'd been looking for for a long time.

After starting off with the thing about the brick, I feared the worst. Would they be trying to ride on the outlaw image of "window-smashers" while scorning and marginalizing the actual people responsible for that image? Fortunately, they do stay out of that trap pretty well. They include a couple of explicitly anarchist voices and a positive account of running with the black bloc a the 2001 Bush inauguration. Two or three pieces take on the endless squabble over rules and tactics; their approach is to give a few examples of ridiculous behavior by both black blocs and authoritarian pacifists and call on everyone to avoid ridiculous extremes and learn from each other's good points.

These folks are clearly all about unity. The book is definitely aimed at winning converts and firing people up more than at having a discussion about what we need to change and do better. The parts about property destruction and stuff are really the only hint of disagreement in the book, and they couldn't really get around that one without pissing someone off. Of course, that's standard and it doesn't' make it a bad book necessarily but at the least it leaves me wanting more. I worry that when we invite people onboard by only showing the good parts and not the controversies and questions, we're kind of saying that we're looking for foot soldiers and we'll take care of the planning and thinking ourselves. Why not put the open questions out there and invite new people to bring their full experience and creativity to share the challenges with us? Why not include anarchists, socialists, NGO people and whatever, talking about how their visions for the future are different from each other? Or something about why some people have broken off from the World Social Forum and started having alternative global meetings? What about the hard work that so many people are doing to make these protest movements connect with poor people and people of color who are being violently assaulted by global capitalism here in the US?

I think that linking the Seattle protests, New York community gardens, squatting and such to movements in countries on the short end of the neoliberal stick is completely legitimate. But it does create a sense of contrast that isn't really addressed. In Argentina, Bolivia, and Mexico, bottom-up movements have formed by means of neighborhood assemblies

and consultas, and these are inspiring examples of new kinds of democracy. Here we have action spokescouncils, and that's also an inspiring example of democracy. But how come our actions don't take direction from neighborhood assemblies and consultas? What would it take?

It's not these folks job to write the book I would like to read. But I do think it's a problem that they completely ignore all the antiracist criticism of this movement that people have been bringing up for years now, and it's a perfect example of the willful blindness to the issue that those critics have been attacking. Even so, though, I can't really condemn the book because it does what it does so well. I don't know if I'd recommend paying the full $18 cover price for it, but if you shoplift, go get it. Then if you don't like it, you can always throw it through someone's window.
-Lee Worden

A Sort Of Homecoming
written by Damon Hurd, drawn Pedro Camello
24 pages per issue, 3 issues, $3.50 per issue
Alternative Comics
503 NW 37th Ave.
Gainesville, FL 32609-2204

This book/series came out over the last 6 months or so. Many comic shops will have a few copies still on their Independent Publishers' shelves.

Owen Reilly was a dweeb in his childhood. He's now a moderately successful adult, with a good career and a good wife. His best friend, David, and he parted ways with some bitterness a while before the story takes place. After he and David make plans to get together again, David dies unexpectedly. The shock of his friend's untimely death and the return to the town they grew up in for the funeral sends Owen into flashback after flashback scene. Getting through the death of a friend is tough and we get to go through Owen's pain with him.

Yes, if you spend the day glued to Lifetime Movie Channel this comic is for you. There's laughter and tears, the ups and downs of a life-long relationship ended too soon. And there's even a scene in the first issue with Owen getting a lesson about coping with death from an elderly stranger; a lesson that helps him decide how to walk offstage at the end of issue three.

I don't know. Yeah, Owen learns to cope with losing David (and also takes another step in coping with his father's recent death). But what about when his mom dies? When his wife dies? And he's going to die, too. Just what do the characters in stories like these achieve? Lovers of this sort of story proclaim that the stories reflect the majesty and strength of the human spirit. I don't see that, I just see people suffering the worst that life has to offer with only more life to live as their reward.

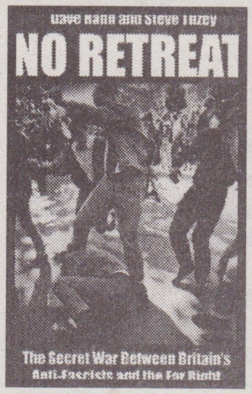
And as a depiction of human suffering and sorrow this has a weak point: the medium. Regular books use of large masses of words for communicating. Comics employ a storytelling technique that uses pictures augmented with words. Communicating emotions in pictures is a challenge to any artist. Pictures, especially when grouped together to as a narrative, generally rely on portraying activity to communicate the story to the reader. I think this is why the Superhero genre dominates comics. What is more visually interesting: a skinny guy with an anger squiggle over his head and a frown on his face saying "damn it!" or a big green giant smashing an army tank to flying-everywhere-bits shouting "Hulk smash!" Certainly not

Pedro Camello, the artist, doesn't deal with the story he has to draw in any way that moves me. His style is a little too cartoony for me to like it at first sight. Many of his depictions of facial expression were opaque to me, robbing them of any artistic impact. The use of the get-shocking-news-on-the-phone-drop-bag-of-grocies-keep-camera-on-leaking-grocery-bag sequence wins no awards for originality. While his drawing style is cartoony, Camello doesn't delve into impressionism or other artistic storytelling techniques to enhance the reader's experience.

The writer, however, is quite at home in this project. Judging by statements Mr. Hurd has made about the book, he glosses autobiographical material for his stories. The characters and he grew up in the same region. Like Owen, Hurd moved to Boston and became a comic creator (Owen is a cartoonist). I happen to have grown up in the same area too. We have the train stations depicted in the story in common.

The comic uses two editors. Mr. Hurd's wife edits his work. Mr. Camello is edited separately, I think in South America. I don't know what brought Hurd and Camello together, but I don't think they are together enough. Mr. Hurd's story material is of the sort that shines when brilliantly executed, but is banal when not polished. Details of places seem wrong to me (the classroom that Owen and David meet in as children had strange looking desks arranged in rows that seemed too far apart for a classroom, the train station in Poughkeepsie, NY doesn't look the way it's drawn), keeping me from being drawn fully into the story.

O.K. We've got a life-goes-on-even-when-your-loved-ones-die story. Fine writing, unimpressive drawing. Comics fans, keep an eye on Mr. Hurd. In 3-5 years he'll be the hot writer on some DC or Marvel book, bringing a new humanity and pathos to a furious-fisted spandex boy.
—Seth Hollander



No Retreat: The Secret War Between Britain's Anti-Fascists and the Far Right
Dave Hann & Steve Tilzey
£7.99
Milo Books • 10 Park St • Lytham • Lancs FY8 5LU • UK

More of a personal account than a detailed history, this book follows the formation of the Squads, Stewards and later Anti Fascist Action, formed by a group of working class left wing activists to physically confront the growing right wing movement in the Britain in the 70s. These groups were instrumental in the disruption and in some cases complete destruction of localized Fascist groups across the country.

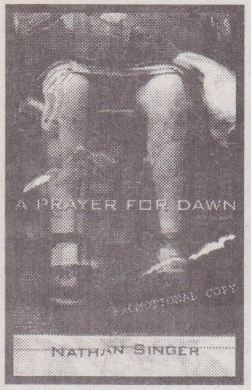
The book is in two parts; the first by Steve Tilzey chronicles the beginnings of the Manchester Squads, which came about in the 1970s as a direct response to the leftist Socialist Workers Party Anti Nazi League's reluctance to physically confront fascists. Some members of the SWP became disillusioned with the Party's stance and formed the Squads, whose prime motives were to drive the Nazis off the streets by any means necessary. Tilzey's (and later Hann's) account gives some historical overview of key actions and dates, but focuses more on the action on the streets giving vivid accounts of nazis being battered across the pavements of the North of England as well as forays into London to confront NF (National Front) and BNP (British National Party) marches.

Throughout Tilzey's account there is clearly friction with the SWP who viewed these direct action groups as nothing more than a bunch of working class thugs. In the end Tilzey was ejected from the SWP but continued the fight against fascists on the streets with the AFA (formed in 1985) whose ideology was to "oppose fascism both physically and ideologically" and later Searchlight who became more of an intelligence gathering operation. While Tilzey is no literary genius, he has a competent writing style, which flows and keeps the reader gripped to his tales of battles on the terraces and streets of Manchester as well as a stint in prison as a result of anti-fascist activities. There is no impartiality in his writing as he rails against both the fascists and other members of Leftist groups he does not agree with (some argue this constant bickering and name calling was what put an end to the AFA in the early part of the 2000's).

Hann's disillusionment with Red Action, ANL, SWP and AFA is also present with an undercurrent of bitterness, which sours his part of the book. His portion of the book picks up when Tilzey's involvement waned in the 1980's with his involvement in Red Action and the formation of AFA. Even more than Tilzey, Hann relishes the violence and goes into graphic

detail about battering "the fash" with a variety of weapons, hardly able to contain his glee as he and his cohorts batter another witless right-winger across the pavement. Whilst touching upon the growth of the BNP, Hann also covers the rise of Blood And Honour, Combat 18 and the right wing skinhead movement, in particular "the Main Event", a huge skinhead festival headlined by Skrewdriver in the early 90s that was disrupted by anti-fascists (Hann included). At times Hann's writing style reads like a sensationalist tabloid account, not unlike Bill Buford's *Among the Thugs* book about violent football gangs. This sensationalism at times detracts from the serious subject matter, something that this book has been criticized for. I whole-heartedly subscribe to the "by any means necessary" approach both these writers adhere to, and so had no problem reading about vanloads of anti-fascists with bats and iron bars hunting down fascist gatherings. However, Hann's treatment of the subject matter seems clumsy at times, fueling criticisms that the AFA were nothing more than leftist hooligans. The main aspect missing from the book, however, was any real account of AFA's actions off the streets with their political work, political analysis, press and the international growth. Some members of the AFA itself have criticized the accounts as being inaccurate factually which could easily be the case as much of the specifics of events are hazy at times.

In short, Hann and Tilzey have an admirable and interesting story to tell of two committed anti-fascists but the book falls far short of being any kind of definitive history of Britain's Anti Fascist movements. If you keep that in mind this is a great read for anyone with an interest in the direct fight against fascism.
—Tim Brooks



A Prayer for Dawn
Nathan Singer
213 pages • $16.95
Bleak House Books
P.O Box 8573
Madison, WI 53708

The term "popular fiction" has always seemed like a misnomer. Usually applied to the mystery and thriller genre, it is a style of fiction geared toward the mass-produced and mass-consumed type usually spotted in the non-candy aisles in supermarkets. But the term can also apply to unlikely trends, and with the success of Chuck Palahniuk (*Fight Club, Survivor*, and a host of others) the current trend is shock value.

Not that shock value is anything new. An indignant public banned works by authors now considered literary masters like James Joyce, John Steinbeck, Henry Miller and William S. Burroughs. Since the invention of the written word, authors have deliberately appalled their audiences. Sometimes they succeed, either because of or in spite of their criticism. When they do, a flood of imitators follows.

From the cover photograph of Nathan Singer's first novel, a peep shot of a little girl's skirt, to the notation under the title that this is a "Thrash Novel," everything about this book looks prepared to shock.

But if you've read anything written in the last ten years, you won't be shocked, as all elements of *A Prayer for Dawn* feel like something that was done before. The first paragraph alone brings up memories already implanted from Palahniuk's *Survivor*, as well as Jhonen Vasquez's *Johnny the Homicidal Maniac*, right down to the wall painted with blood. By the time you've read the first page, you're ready to hate the author for his plagiarism.

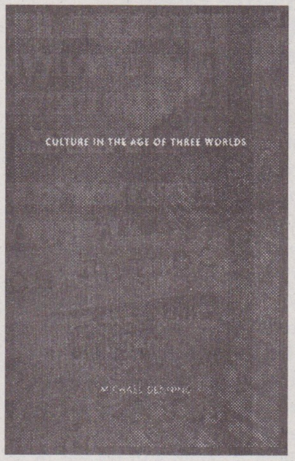
If you can make it past that first page, however, you might find yourself quite surprised. Singer crafts his characters in such a believable manner that you start to wonder if he instead of plagiarizing other authors, he might be plagiarizing your life, complete with all your friends. Dropping current pop culture references with impunity like Jello Biafra and the Ramones helps further the illusion as Singer's writing continues fast and furious, set in the style of a Web surfer clicking on random links.

The story line at first follows a select few characters: Joey Spitfire, a rockabilly prison scribe with a burgeoning punk following; Caroline Powell, Joey's agent who wants to get in on the ground floor for the next Nirvana; Jeff Mican, an underground artist dangerously close to breaking obscenity laws with his images. All characters cope with their pressing fame in different ways, with each considering the moral consequences of their actions.

The book's sense of urgency for characters living in fear—fear of the law, fear of prison, and fear of what each person is capable of, good or naught—make the reader realize that while they may have seen this before, it's still relevant.

But when these main characters reach the apex of their moral quandaries, they are disposed of, leaving too many holes in the story. New or secondary characters are either introduced or brought to the forefront, and we begin the cycle of questioning right verses wrong once again.

Unfortunately, this is the point where Singer fails to make the center hold. Too many questions stay unanswered. This may be by design, which has also been done before. But it's also disjointed, which doesn't happen with the earlier points of the book. Because of this, *Prayer* loses the originality that made it stand out and becomes another poor imitation of what's now popular.
-Dean Carrico



Culture in the Age of Three Worlds
Michael Denning
234 pages • $19
Verso
180 Varick Street
New York, NY 10014-4606

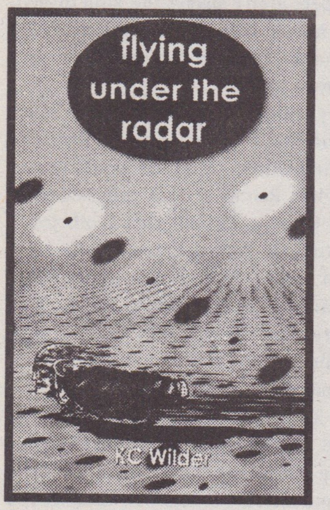
I am not sure how much you, our valued readers, care about things like "credentials," but if you do, try to suspend your disbelief for the next several paragraphs. The fact of the matter is that Michael Denning, author of the solid new book *Culture in the Age of Three Worlds*, is the William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of American Studies at Yale (or so sayeth the press release). I, the lowly shitworker assigned to review said book, am merely a nineteen year-old somewhat-punk kid who just finished his first undergraduate year. Such an experience differential made this task rather intimidating at first, and I understand that some of you, with that in mind, will likely skip straight to the next review. I will not be hurt by this; I'd probably skip me too. However, for those of you who plan on sticking it out, let us progress with all haste.

In his book, Denning, who has also written books on the cultural aspects of labor movements and the social impact of the dime novel, crafts a vast, multi-faceted argument for social change centered on the history of cultural studies as an academic discipline. He contends that the age of three worlds [the period between the end of World War II and the end of the Cold War in which mainstream thought assumed that the world was divided into three: the first world (capitalist nations), the second world (communist nations), and the third world (what the book terms "decolonizing" nations)] produced a new shift in academia towards cultural studies, while elsewhere leftist movements, especially labor movements, were relegated to a state of limbo. Denning argues that a cultural front must do its part to reshape cultural conceptions of labor, and that cultural studies may be the vehicle for achieving such ends. In other words, Denning provides a welcome justification of cultural studies, and a needed assertion of the discipline's relevance. In 2004, post-irony pop culture theorists such as *Spin* Magazine Senior Writer Chuck Klosterman (whose books I have, I must begrudgingly admit, thoroughly enjoyed) operate under the cultural studies umbrella, while wholly ignoring the need for an activist cultural front that Denning strives for. Culture in the Age of Three Worlds offers ample evidence for the evolution of modern cultural studies into a force for liberation by looking at the discipline's role during the Cold War, and asking how we can make cultural studies work for the Left in the age of "globalization."

By necessity, Denning's critique references most every relevant cultural theorist of the past century, and while he clearly understands that his audience will be primarily made up of those already entrenched in academia, his style and delivery remain accessible to novices (like me). The comprehensiveness of Denning's study and the direct nature of his prose allow Three Worlds to evade the trappings of most academic texts (namely, that they are written expressly for academics to read) and function on an additional level that runs parallel to his argument. In other words, his references read like a who's-who of cultural theory, providing almanac-like compartmental summations of huge ideas, and giving readers new to the discipline several hundred good places to start studying up. Throughout, I found myself tempted to simply turn his footnotes into my own personal reading list. This remains the true success of Denning's work: that his book can simultaneously be an entry point into cultural studies, and a plan to move the domain forward into entirely new territory.

Because of how much I thoroughly enjoyed *Three Worlds*, I am hesitant to nitpick. However, I suppose that anything that draws attention to itself while detracting from the work as a whole should be noted, so I must mention Denning's tendency to over-glorify his source material. Every work he mentions is either "brilliant," "ground-breaking," or "excellent." I'm not trying to insinuate that the works Denning draws from are not all that he claims they are; it merely weighs down one's ability to read such straight prose when the reader gets bombarded with a volley of unnecessarily gushing adjectives. It is a small criticism, but one worth mentioning, as it manifests itself every few pages or so. In addition, Denning sometimes poses questions that he may not be exactly qualified to answer, such as "why American workers have demonstrated so little class consciousness." A fair question, perhaps even grounded in objective observations; however, it carries a faint taste of an academic condescension towards the working class that, whether intentional or not, could prove detrimental to the overriding goals of Denning's work.

On the whole, Culture in the Age of Three Worlds remains an engaging history of an ever-evolving discipline that many in the academic world still struggle to define. While it may not be terribly accessible to those not already predisposed towards cultural studies, it will provide a comprehensive roadmap to those willing to follow.
-Max Tremblay

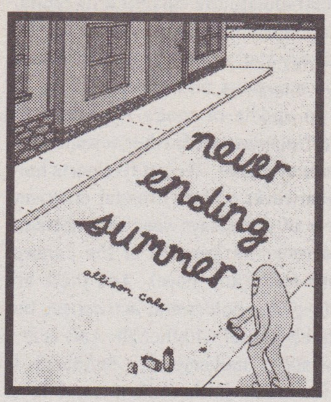


Flying Under The Radar
KC Wilder
Infinity • $13.95

Author Wilder has been through several incarnations in his life. As a onetime scene reporter for our own *MRR*, as Bob Z, indefatigable fanzine writer and editor, and more recently as KC/DC, glam punk guitarist and songwriter for San Francisco-based shock rockers Apocalypstick, one constant throughout has been his creativity.

This book is a compendium of prose, poetry, and art by Wilder under a concept he calls Data Surrealism, sort of a 21st century update on Dada. However, his long list of influences (reflected in the forward) is decidedly 20th century, an illiterati of cool, pre-cool, and proto-cool. The poems begin in young boy-adolescent-growing up-youth-then-adulthood-jaded-manchild consciousness. The joys of skateboarding, a crush on the schoolteacher, a mishmash of experience and emotion and sensation written in a beat style with punk undertones, Lester Bangs and Richard Meltzer wordplay, Ginsberg craziness, Bukowski tuffness cum tenderness.

Post growing up brings more complex adult themes, scenes of the city (Wilder lived in and around NYC for many years), the alliterative and hilarious "Penis Perspiration," San Francisco, traveling, politics. These are interspersed with Wilder's drawings, collages, and photographs. Very entertaining, funny, and touching stuff. Check out Wilder's website (www.frankmedia.com) for more from the man.
—Henry Yu

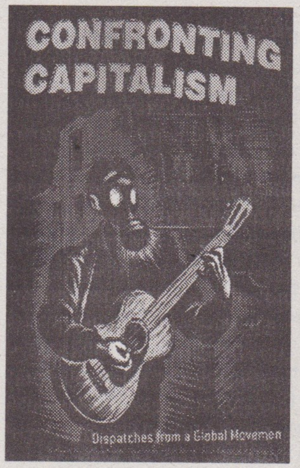


Never Ending Summer
Allison Cole
96 pages • $11.95
Alternative Comics
503 NW 37th Avenue
Gainesville FL 32609-2204
jmason@indyworld.com

Never Ending Summer is a new graphic novel by Allison Cole who is a relative newcomer to the comics scene. The story is a sweet & simple one illustrated in a very delicately spare style. Its an autobiographical tale all about being young & confused & trying to figure out relationships as friend & lovers come & go.

The main character, Allison, a young artist who works a slave labor job in a comic store, is having boy problems. An old boyfriend & a potential new one, Her girlfriends are experiencing complications in their relationships too. What to do? "is it too early to start ddrinking?" Art projects, partying & drinking are the major pastimes for the characters as a long hot summer sneaks by. The story is like a children's tale in its simplicity & not quite human characters but with "adult content"

The drawing style is very fine & minimal. The characters all resemble creatures that are sort of half way between human & moomin (did you ever read those amazing *Moomin* books by Tove Jansson when you were a kid?) with small distinguishing features, no necks & mitten hands. Cole is able to convey complex & conflicting emotions with the barest of lines. Everything is drawn in lines with no shading so it sort of resembles a coloring book. But I didn't really have the urge to color – the book is so beautifully printed in a duotone cream & dark olive green. I was wishing the story could have been a little longer but maybe Cole will write/draw a sequel.
This is a great book to read before or after the heavy political stuff – subtly complex & sweet.
- Fly



Confronting Capitalism: Dispatches from a Global Movement
edited by Eddie Yuen, Daniel Burton-Rose and George Katsiaficas
410 pages • $16.95
Soft Skull Press • 71 Bond Street Brooklyn, NY 11217

"So, overall, is the activist left just an inchoate, 'post ideological' mass of do-gooders, pragmatists and puppeteers?"

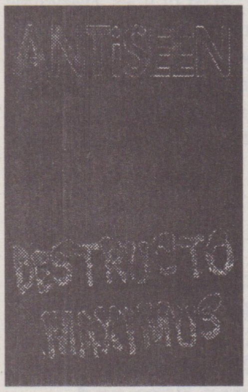
That's from p.309 of Confronting Capitalism, and if you make it that far you should be able to handle such a question. If you care about issues like: global indy media, direct action, pink vs. black blocs, what 'nonviolence' means in 2004, NGOs true function, & the difference between theory & ideology, then this book is required reading. If not, go on back to the ads for those really crucial 7"s on the other pages on this fine magazine.

Mixing pieces from street-level organizers & high-profile academics, *Confronting Capitalism* comes to us beautiful as a brick in a cop's face. If the 1999 Seattle protest was a clarion call to many white U.S. activists, then this collection furthers the debate in much-needed ways. Yes, Seattle was awesome in a temporal "we win" way. But to view such outbursts isolated from a global & continual struggle is typical American myopia. Seattle is a useful reference point (particularly for those of us in the "global North") and a fine springboard from which to extrapolate the current anti-capitalism dialogues. of which Confronting Capitalism does.

The editors offer the book as a "a way station on the road to understanding this phenomenon, a series of snapshots and critiques from an unfinished history." The book is also an update of 2002's *The Battle for Seattle: The New Challenge to Capitalist Globalization*, further testament to the amount of relevant dialogue currently available. We get five parts here moving from overview, history and report backs on into broader criticisms and further strategies. Surprisingly few of the essays veer into abstruse syntax and theory (although Brian Holmes's *The Revenge of the Concept* piece made me glad to not be an English major any more). And there are some cringe-worthy terms like *anarkids*, *globaphobics* and *activistism*, but the points are well placed amidst the questions of whether the Left is at a creative impasse or even a "genuine social movement." Solidarity is stressed, as the Zapatistas told us a few years back: "Affirm local level struggles while simultaneously inviting an exploration of larger networks of struggle."

With 36 or so contributors, styles & focus will obviously vary. But there's a strength and conviction throughout, making for a satisfying read in whatever dose. The global diversity of voices represented here makes for a unifying "but not totalizing" stance. It's the way that words like neoliberalism and free-market fundamentalism get their due. Like the snarky but dead-on glossary at the end of the book--debunking self-labeled activists, liberals and amorphous feel-good terms like community and democracy. Like getting your mind blown in the best ways. Because the closing essays remind us that: "the hardest part is thinking."

- Travis Fristoe.



ANTiSEEN — Destructo Maximus
Compiled and edited by Jeff Clayton, Leslie Goldman and Larry Kay
267 pages • $25.00
Steel Cage Books
PO Box 29247,
Philadelphia, PA 19125
www.steelcagerecords.com

Fuck yes! Leslie Goldman, Larry Kay and Jeff Clayton in association with Steel Cage Records and Books have published the most magnificent volume about the infamous Scum Rock Kings Antiseen!! This book covers the entire spectrum—record and CD reviews, a complete discography, pictures, flyers, posters, tour diaries, drawings, interviews—pretty much the whole litany of horrors these rock 'n' roll juggernauts have perpetrated on the unsuspecting public over the last twenty years. This book comes with a handsome black leatherette exterior, with silver foil lettering on the front. Antiseen—Destructo Maximus covers Antiseen's early development in Charlotte, North Carolina and their first gig in October 1983 at The Barn in Boone, North Carolina. You get to follow Antiseen through triumphant tours of Europe in sold-out houses with some fans following the band from city to city as they brought destruction to another town. You are reminded of the brilliant vinyl output by Antiseen—from self-released 7"s on Death Train Records, Drastic in May 1985 and Royalty in December of 1986 to work with Todd Goss (Rave Records) and Ajax Records in 1989, which produced the Blood of Freaks 7". Malcomn Tent and his TPOS Records from Danbury, Connecticut was always a huge Antiseen supporter. Dog Meat Records (Australia) and Jettison Records Carolina put out good Antiseen product. Mr. Jeff Skipski—known to many Antiseen associates as ".Negative Force"—would jump into the fray in 1992 .Mr. Jeff Skipski and his Baloney Shrapnel Records got involved with ANTiSEEN that year producing the great The Vault of Antiseen 7". The earth was turned sideways on its axis. Mr. Skipski became roadie, confidante, drinking buddy and international mascot for Antiseen—Pioneers of the Confederacy of Scum. Another much coveted Baloney Shrapnel release is the Antiseen/Cocknoose split from 1993, I've Aged Twenty Years in Five. Baloney Shrapnel will live on in infamy.

Mike Cooper and Ruff Nite Records from Philadelphia became an ardent fan and staunch Antiseen supporter early on in 1996 with the Antiseen/Rancid Vat Funk U split followed by the Jailhouse / People Like You 7" in 1998. Great stuff. Steel Cage came aboard the Antiseen hellsbound train in 2000 with TKO Records picking up the gauntlet in 2002. Antiseen has slowly infected the minds and the hearts of the fine citizens of this nation. Now all true rock 'n' roll devotees must bow down to the altar of Mr's Clayton and Young and the mighty Antiseen.

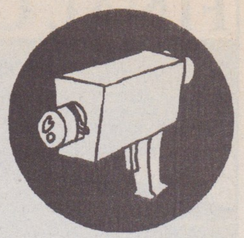
Reading through this book, one can watch the reviews turn from morally offended complaints to glowing praise as some of the listeners began to understand that this band was the real thing—not just here for a temporary fashion show appearance. Antiseen is in it for the long haul – these rock and roll heavyweights have already outlasted most of their puny imitators and have decimated all the politically correct pantywaists who have dared to criticize. Steel Cage and the fabulous Leslie G have put together a spectacular book for you longhaired biker types, punk rockers, and skinheads. The layout is superior, the fine printing job don by C•C Offset Printing Co. in New York, NY, is top flight. Leslie gives a small introduction, which says a mouthful about this project and the band members involved. Read on: "There are so many more years worth of records, tours, shows, press, accolades, and insults on the band's horizon, looking back really only covers half the story; as much as I've enjoyed going back over the band's history, as a fan I'm most looking forward to what will happen next. Before Larry and I started Steel Cage we were music fans; and since we each respectively discovered the band, we've been fans of Antiseen. Throughout the time we've been doing the label and magazine we've been able to meet, interview, and or work with many people whose music I admire, enjoy and respect; unfortunately some of those instances have wizened me to the fact that sometimes when you get up close, people who make music you admire, enjoy and respect aren't always the kind of people you can admire, enjoy or respect as human beings. I'm happy to say I'm walking away from this project more of an Antiseen fan than ever, as a band and as people, and I think that says a lot."

Many thanks go out to Leslie, Larry and Mr. Clayton. This is an amazing book—a true labor of love—and absolutely essential for all Antiseen fans. Here are some of Mr. Clayton's kind words: "Antiseen would like to thank: Larry and Leslie at Steel Cage, Mark Rainey at TKO, Jeff Skipski at Baloney Shrapnel, Travis Wilson, Tom O'Keefe, Cosmo, Jami Wolf, Jamie Hoover at Hooverama, Dave Harris at Studio B, Peneye Craver, Merle Allin, Justin Crockett, Toshi Hironaka, Simon Stokes, Scott Savage, Kelly Dean, The Wizard Lounge, The Pits, Ralph Carrera, Jason Griscom, Radok, Tom Dark, Sourpuss Clothing, Bonnie Moore, Clay Moore, Jeff "BBQ" Young, Rancid Vat, Bootleg Bill, Cocknoose, Hellstomper, Limecell, the Dead Kings, the Bad Vibes, the Murder Junkies, Hammerlock, Gideon Smith & the Dixie Damned, the Nerds, Nothing But Puke, Born Bavarian, Rupture, Alcoholics Unamimous, the Tunnel Rats, Jeff Dahl, Before I Hang, Frankenstein Drag Queens (RIP), and all the bands we have shared the stage with all over the world, all the writers, photographers, and internet critics who contributed to the bulk of this book, all the clubs and promoters who treated us right, all the labels we have worked with and, most of all, thanks to our fans worldwide". Some of these Antiseen stalwarts have been supporting the Boys From Brutalsville for more than twenty years- before it was fashionable. These people deserve much respect.

Contact Antiseen at: PO Box 4905, Rock Hill, SC 29732; www.antiseen.com. For your copy of Antiseen Destructo Maximus, send $25 dollars to Steel Cage Books, Division of Steel Cage Records, PO Box 29247, Philadelphia, PA 19125; www.steelcagerecordss.com.

-Bruce Roehrs

MOVIES



BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS ALWAYS TO DOUBT THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION

As long as I can remember I have hated the evening news. My parents watched it faithfully every night. I was usually bored or exasperated with what the news choose to show. I guess I always knew there was some sort of agenda, everyone's favorite word to throw around these days when someone is challenging Bush and the Iraqi War. I know I have not accepted it, but I always think twice when I am presented with the "facts".

Control Room is a documentary about the Arab news station Al Jazeera. Most Americans have heard about Al Jazeera only because Rumsfeld declared them the voice of Osama Bin Laden. Arab leaders ban the station from their countries by claiming interestingly that they are pro-American. In actuality Al Jazeera is an Arab news station located in Qatar that is not affiliated with any government. They have 40 million viewers.

Control Room takes a fly on the wall approach. It starts at the beginning of the US attack on Iraq. What you get to see is a different approach to how the story is presented. The reporters and producers try to be objective. Yet, as we have an overly patriotic news system in the US, Al Jazeera understandably leans toward the Arab point of view.

What is the most interesting for me is how information is doled out in a war. The US Army has a media base called CentCom. Here reporters from all over the world gather to receive reports from the US Military about what is going on. They turn around and report what information is given to them. The Al Jazeera reporters point out the mistakes in US news coverage. While watching the infamous scene of the US tanks going into Baghdad, it is pointed out that the Iraqis marching in the square do not have Baghdad accents and one of them has an old version of the Iraqi flag in his pocket. We are shown a longer shot of the scene that reveals no other Iraqi people rejoicing in the square. Everyone else is probably hiding from the tanks and gunfire. Perhaps they are not happy with the US occupation.

Many things in **Control Room** are amusing and upsetting considering the scandals that are coming out because of the war. When Al Jazeera broadcasts interviews with US prisoners, the US politicians and media is outraged that Al Jazeera would do that. The US prisoners are sitting and handcuffed. The reporter asks each prisoner his or her name and where he or she is from. Seems a bit mild compared to what happened at Abu Ghraib prison. When the US bombs the Al Jazeera offices in Baghdad killing one of their reporters, a producer calmly states that they get the message. (http://www.noujaimfilms.com/)

Control Room isn't getting as much hype as **Fahrenheit 9/11**. Either way I am glad people are starting to talk about what is really going on and questioning things on a larger scale. I won't bore you with a review of **Fahrenheit 9/11** since you are probably sick of hearing about it. Personally, I am finding it humorous that as many left-wing people are against this film as right-wing ones. It kind of reminds me of when punk rock went mainstream.

Now Orson Welles is someone who knows how to twist the documentary form in exciting ways. My neighborhood movie theater had a series of Welles films this month. One I had never seen was **F For Fake** a documentary about fakery and people you commit fraud. Welles' style is overly obnoxious and extremely fun. He has no qualms about pointing out everyone's deviousness including his own while making you wonder whether any of this is actually true. At the beginning of the film he mentions that he promises that everything in the first hour of the film is the truth. As you get involved in the story you may forget this. Fortunately, Welles reminds you and points out that the last story he told was made up.

The main story is about art forger Elmyr de Hory. He has retired to Ibiza, an island off the coast of Spain. We see de Hory drawing a perfect replica of a Picasso in minutes. He tells his story of how he could not sell any of his own paintings. He started copying famous paintings and sold them to art dealers. De Hory's biographer Clifford Irving tests a forged painting by bringing it to New York gallery owners to see if they can tell if it is a fake. The painting is accepted as genuine and Welles turns the tables on to the so-called experts. He theorizes that if it weren't for the art market then there would be no need for forgers.

As it turns out Irving wrote a fake biography of Howard Hughes. Irving was a fiction writer who couldn't get a break so he wrote the biography figuring Hughes was such a recluse that he would never come out against the book. Well, he was wrong. Welles attempts to misrepresent the facts, argue toward one position and then contradict himself make this film so fun to watch. Appropriately enough it makes you think twice about everything you hear whether from Fox News or Michael Moore.

My boyfriend and I have a private joke when it comes to filmgoing. He likes to know all about the movie before we see it and I contend that I enjoy a film better if I don't know anything about it. Whenever I suggest going to a movie, I make sure I quickly say what it is about before he can ask. It's funny to us. While we were wandering aimlessly through the city of San Francisco one Saturday afternoon, I remembered I had free tickets to see a film called **The Mother**. I could not remember what it was about so we looked at the poster which had a picture of an older woman and quotes from film reviewers claiming the film was sexual and erotic. We still didn't have any clue what it was about, but somehow Mike agreed to go see it.

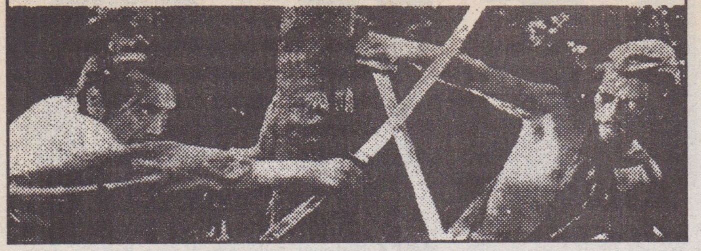
We couldn't have been more surprised about **The Mother**. It is a strange story about a horrible family. The parents go to visit their son and his family in London. When they get their everyone is doing their thing and no one seems particularly happy to see them. The grandkids barely look up from their video game to say hello. Then they go to visit their daughter and her son. She is overjoyed to see them and makes dinner for everyone. The father has a heart attack while in London and dies. After the funeral the son drives his mother back to her house. She understandably does not want to stay at the house. Her son grudgingly takes her back to his house.

After her daughter-in-law makes it obvious that she does not want his mother there, she moves in with her daughter. The daughter is happy to have her mother stay and confides in her about her married boyfriend. Her mother advises her to give him an ultimatum. The mother and daughter seem to be bonding and getting along. Then the mother sleeps with the daughter's boyfriend.

I don't find it shocking that an older woman would want to sleep with a younger man. I find it appalling that a mother would do that to her daughter. The daughter was nice to her mother. Why didn't she fuck over her son?

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o *MRR* PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. You can also reach me by e-mail at carolynmrr@juno.com

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



The blockbuster **Spiderman 2** attracted record-breaking audiences in its first weekend—but it's more remarkable that Michael Moore's **Fahrenheit 9//11** was doing the same thing—in its third week.
It's a film that actually shouldn't have been made—at least if Disney chief Michael Eisner had realized what was happening; Moore's film, budgeted at a mere three million dollars, apparently slipped through the cracks. After it had won the Grand Prize at Cannes, it was denied an American release. This only served to fuel public interest.

Michael Moore offers a film that every bit as affecting as last year's **Bowling for Columbine**, but it's a difficult juggling act. How do you make a partisan documentary without making it seem too much like an overt propaganda piece? How do you object to the Bush policy of militarism without casting a dark shadow over so many self-sacrificing young soldiers? And considering Moore's journalistic record, how much of **Fahrenheit 9/11** should be taken seriously?

It's easy to nitpick, but most of the film seems pretty solid. Moore begins with the hard stuff—reliving the 9/11 tragedy with a black screen, followed by shots of terrified, bewildered New Yorkers as they flee to safety. Their faces ask, "Why?" It's all beyond understanding.

When the smoke clears, Michael Moore digs in for battle. His journalism is founded on well-considered questions, and his answers are troubling. Why did the Bush White House spirit away the entire Bin Laden clan when they might help answer so many basic questions? Why are the Bin Ladens the *only* air transport allowed out of the country during a freeze on air transportation?

With a meticulousness that's not usual in Michael Moore films, we're presented with a challenging scenario. The Bush clan has long enjoyed a close business relationship with the Bin Ladens as well as other Saudi lobbies. The majority of the suicide bombers were Saudi in origin.

So what does Bush do after 9/11? He bombs Afghanistan—then Iraq, whose relationship to the tragedy is tenuous at best.

Maybe the film's biggest challenge is to recast the "war on terrorism" as something quite different. Moore suggests something many Americans had already begun to suspect: that the Iraq war (and to a lesser extent, the invasion of Afghanistan) was waged to expand our sphere of influence and ensure a privileged position in the queue for foreign oil.

The quintessential Michael Moore film has him onscreen much of the time, offering snide comments while walking around in a ratty baseball cap. In **Fahrenheit 9/11**, he spends more time behind the camera, unseen but very much felt.

Given he gravity of its subject matter, he saves his jokes for the Bush administration. Some have complained that these are easy shots, but the mere fact that he's able to find so many gaffes may not speak well for Bush or his staff.

With its release timed to coincide with the presidential election, **Fahrenheit 9//11** has clearly been made to influence its outcome. But Moore may pull a hat trick: with millions of undecided young voters and so many others disenchanted with the Bush White House. True, it's five months before the election—but look for the DVD release in October.

George Bush called Al-Jazeera "the voice of Osama Bin Laden, and in the absence of argument to the contrary, the label has somehow stuck. **Control Room** is an attempt to somehow equalize the debate—a documentary on the inner workings of the television station.

The film brackets the time from George Bush's announcement of war to the fall of Baghdad. Despite the sometimes-intense military action, **Control Room** is mostly discursive. Like the network itself, the goal seems to be to get the information out there—all of it, with an emphasis on the intangible quality of "balance."

While the basic subject matter of **Control Room** may seem heady and abstract, it turns out to be anything but.

The film is peppered with some of the more controversial and striking footage from the recent conflict. Al-Jazeera was widely condemned for airing footage of dead American soldiers; it was, we're told by US interests, a violation of the Geneva rules of war. The station immediately withdrew the footage, but the irony of the situation wasn't lost on many Iraqi: here was what many thought to be an illegal war, and now a news service was being criticized for showing the consequences of that illegality.

Many Iraqis were thankful having Saddam Hussein and his clan pulled from power, but nearly all of the interviewees offer a unique (and uniquely skewed) way of looking at current events. First, American aggression is seen to be a ploy to control Iraqi oil. Second, US aid to Israel is invariably seen as belligerence against Palestine —and an insult to all Arabs. Al-Jazeera frequently offers stories that may fuel these sentiments—but it's also despised by many in the region as being—of all things —sympathetic to the Western point of view.

According to the Al-Jazeera station manager in Qatar, you can't hope to win a modern war without propaganda, and the US has shown itself to be masterful at orchestrating information. Much of the early footage had reporters riding right along with soldiers as they took over one town after another, making the war seem somehow almost easy. But when the US invaded Baghdad, the first missile– a type lauded for its accuracy—"accidentally" bombed Al-Jazeera's headquarters, killing one and knocking that news bureau off the air. Lacking a conduit for broadcasting breaking events in Baghdad, they had to watch as the US took control with no opposing voice. One journalist was killed in the attack.

If there's a profundity in **Control Room**, it's in the various ways it shows how media can be managed—with disastrous effects. One thing's for sure: you'll never see this footage on the Fox network.

Still another documentary is more populist in style. After selling 90 million albums, most bands need to be brought down to size. Documentarians Joe Belinger and Bruce Sinofsky **(Brother's Keeper)** are a dynamic duo who take pains to show the flatulence and ego in the whole "rock star" trip in **Metallica: Some Kind of Monster**.

The film essentially outlines the birth of the band's *St. Anger* LP—a process that begins in a portable studio in San Francisco's Presidio.

The surplus of ego makes things edgy, even when they relocate to a more comfortable space. Vocalist James Hatfield, a lifelong alcoholic, has begun to realize that addiction doesn't mix with work and family life. The drummer, Lars Ulrich, has a trigger-temper, and no patience for Hatfield's moods. Guitarist Kirk Hammett takes on the role of Zen-like peacekeeper. Adding to the mix, they've hired a "performance enhancement coach" at the tune of $40,000 a month; he turns their practice sessions into group therapy sessions, and even begins to suggest lyrics.

Then Hatfield disappears without warning for several months, everyone starts to wonder whether there's even a band anymore.

While the directors filmed the revealing sequences with clear affection for the band, it's hard to imagine how these three fairly rich and successful men could find the pungent youthful discontent that made their work so popular. After 715 days, they have something that sounds like a final product.

Ulrich is able to spend some of the random moments putting his collection of large-format Basquiat paintings for sale at Christies. (They get several million, each.) Perhaps not a savvy move, considering his well-publicized rants against music sharing on Napster (which lost the band more fans than the software program ever could). Hetfield comes off as a selfish, neurotic control freak who can't let band members work on songs when he's not there for his four-hour workdays.

I am not. nor have I ever been a Metallica fan; but I'm very much a follower of the filmmakers, who depart from their typical social documentary style. It obviously has added appeal for fans, but it holds together remarkably well as a story of group conflict. Berlinger and Sanofsky offer access to supremely private moments that strip the band of much of its glamour.

The *St. Anger* album received mixed reviews, and you can't help but wonder whether "maturity" hasn't dealt a blow to the band.

Reactions? Email me at anywhichway@myway.com.

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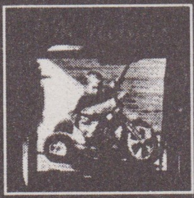

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AGROTÓXICO / RASTA KNAST – "Marcas Da Revolta" split LP

Interesting split here, with Brasil's AGROTÓXICO covering a slew of their favorite German punk tunes (SLIME, RECHARGE, CANALTERROR, MOLOTOW STEW and, of course, RASTA KNAST) and doing a fairly good job of it, while the flip features Germany's RASTA KNAST doing the same with a bunch of their favored Brazilian hardcore tunes. Overall it's pretty cool—I especially enjoyed AGROTÓXICO's version of RASTA KNAST's "Das Ende Der Welt" (which happens to be my favorite tune of theirs) and RASTA KNAST's take on the classic RATOS DE PORÃO blast "Crucificados Pelo Sistema." Not the best place to start for those unfamiliar with the normally very poppy RASTA KNAST or the gruff hardcore of AGROTÓXICO, but cool nevertheless. (MT)
(Nasty Vinyl, Oberstr. 6, 30167 Hannover, GERMANY, www.nastyvinyl.de)

APPENDIX – "Money is Not My Currency" EP

This LP was cannibalized from APPENDIX's *Ei Rahn oo Mun...* LP and *Huora* EP—a total of 20 choice examples of vintage Finnish punk. Muscular, heavily riffy HC tunes like the classic "Kuitenkin" show the band's forte: tense mid- to fast-paced tunes with gutsy vocals and amazing presence in the guitars. If you don't have the originals, this is an investment you shouldn't pass up. (SS)
(Hohnie, c/o Andreas Hohn, An Der Kuhtranke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY)

ARM – CD

Frickin' solid boys! Very earnest vocals jump around on top of a rubbery now-wave post-disco groove punk. Spidery guitars lay shards of jagged crystal on top of crisply fried drums, etc. These guys have probably, I'm guessing, heard RADIO 4, and thought they had a possibly valid variation on their modus operandi, damn straight! Thus, this record. If you like really good music, then this disc will remind you of some of it. (RW)
(Last Gasp)

THE ARSONS – "Bridges Down" CD

This goes from emo to melodic hardcore to poppy punk rock. It's well played and some of the songs are pretty catchy, but it's a little too "extreme sports" for me. (AD)
(Mad at the World, PO Box 20227 Tompkins Square, Station NY, NY 10009)

AUTONOMIA – "Escapando Al Silencio Impuesto: Discografia 1997-2001" CD

I love Peru's AUTONOMIA— I've been a fan from the first time I heard their melodic, mid-tempo punk stylings on their split with DIOS HASTIO. Great, tuneful sing-a-long punk rock with a strong anarcho/peace punk message. Highly recommended. (MT)
($5 ppd; Catchphraze,, PO Box 41356, Phoenix, AZ 85080-1356, www.catchphrazerecords.com)

AVO / RUNNAMUCKS – "The Zen Sessions" split EP

Fuck yes! AVO—short for APPREHENDED VIOLENCE ORDER— comes crushing into your skull with an EP shared by those Florida cretins the RUNNAMUCKS. Those bad Australian punks AVO start the bloodbath with "All My Friends are Fucked." Check out these sentiments: "They never leave me alone / Always call on the phone / Always coming here / Never buy me a beer…" Fuck yes! Song two by AVO is "Gearheads Suck" about posers who pretend to be hotrodders. AVO fucking rocks!!!! The RUNNAMUCKS side continues the mayhem! These Casselberry brats fucking turn your punk rock world upside down! The RUNNAMUCKS rip through "Overdrive" and "Tonight"—great! Two of the best punk bands on one slab! Get this now! (BR)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13 1098AA, Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS, www.herry.fee.uva.nl)

BLOCKO/MINORITY BLUES BAND – Split EP

Other labels have had their days in the sun, but has any label been as consistently satisfying as Snuffy Smile? Seriously, I am trying to think if Yoichi has put out one stinker in the decade-plus that he has been putting out records. Here is yet another hit, with BLOCKO kicking off their side with some very English-sounding melodic punk in the vein of LEATHERFACE or the stuff that is coming out on NO IDEA these days. As a bonus, BLOCKO covers UK girl group ALL SAINTS' smash hit "Black Coffee." MINORITY BLUES BAND has been around for some time now and is still playing basic (not primitive) pop punk formula *a la* J-CHURCH to much success. This record is a winner all the way around. (JF)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201, Daita Setagaya-ku, Tokyo, 155-0033, JAPAN)

BLUEPRINT - "Seventy Six" CD

Pop punk emo mall rock: BLINK 182 meets HOT

WATER MUSIC. I predict this to be the next big thing, the next theme music to be playing in the sound track of those wretched teen romantic comedy movies. What do I know? It probably already is playing in those movies. God, this is really fucking horrible. Enough said. (AS)
(Broken Spoke, 19983 Lexington, Redford, MI, www.brokenspokerecords.com)

THE BOILS – "The Ripping Waters" EP
Greg and the BOILS have a fucking enthusiastic EP for you punks this month. This material was recorded in the summer of 2002 with the BOILS mining some of the familiar terrain that has made them a streetpunk favorite in the Philadelphia area. With strong vocals and ringing guitars, the BOILS lead into the fury on side one with "Seven Days, Forty Guns" and "Til Tomorrow." The BOILS play their punk with feeling—favorable comparisons to the FORGOTTEN or the DROPKICK MURPHYS could be made. Greg's voice is a powerful weapon. Side two features a great song, "Victory", and a decent song, "Hearts of Fire," which is slightly marred by a crappy ska break. All in all, a very good EP! (BR)
(Knife or Death, www.knifeordeathrecords.com)

BONES BRIGADE / DFA – split EP
Both bands whip their way through some delirious, thrashing punk with lots of metal licks slipped in for good measure. DFA has almost a straight-up metal/hybrid crossover, whereas BONES BRIGADE play more of a thrashed-out skatecore style. Fans of bands like HOLIER THAN THOU will certainly dig both of these bands. (RC)
(Still Holding On, c/o Xavier Lepage, 65 Au Long Pre', 4053 Embouroy, BELGIUM, www.stillholdingon.free.fr)

BOOTER – "Throw It Away" EP
Bass-heavy, distorted, yet strangely melodic DIY punk that reminds me a lot of the Scottish band QUARANTINE for some reason. They're from France, but appear to be singing in English. I think the gist of the lyrics is that they're not very happy. They're not moping around though; they're having a good shout about it. Good stuff. (AM)
(Peste & Cholera, c/o Xavier Barbarit, 1 bd. Ayrault, 49100 Angers, FRANCE, peste.cholera@wanadoo.fr)

BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS – "American Bastard" LP
Yes! Haunted Town has another first class streetrock LP available for you fucks—the *American Bastard* LP. This fucker rocks from the moment you touch the needle down. You get eight tough originals, plus a great cover of "Sunday Morning Coming Down" by Mr. Kris Kristofferson and a good cover of "Boulevard of Broken Dreams" by HANOI ROCKS. Read some of the words BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS write in "Fighting Poor": "Raised on the values of the working class, we've got no future and damn near no past / Been knocked down but never hit the floor, we're the ones they call the fighting poor / They knock down, down and down some more / We're the fuckin' member of the fighting poor / For those who know our struggle, for you this song / No matter what they do you will always be strong / Raised on the values of the working class / Trying to make a future and forget the past / We know we are going to have to always fight / But we're not giving in 'cause we know we are right!" Fuck yah! The BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS have been in Haunted Town stable for years and have proven themselves as consistent high quality Chicago rock 'n' rollers. Thanks goes out to Haunted Town Records for keeping the BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS in the public eye. Thanks to Haunted Town for keeping the music available on vinyl. (BR)
(Haunted Town, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169, Chicago, IL 60647; www.hauntedtownrecords.com)

BRIEFS – "Sex Objects" LP
All right, so yeah they make catchy songs, but so did CHEAP TRICK and *MRR* never reviewed them, did they?? I don't know man, call me an idealist, but I'm not into a band that goes and signs to Interscope (or whatever the fuck) and for some reason the MTV world doesn't work out for them so they come crawling back to the punk scene and expect to welcomed back with open arms. I don't think so. Fuck off—send your records to *SPIN* for review. (AS)
(BYO, PO BOX 67609, LA, CA. 90067, www.byorecords.com)

BROKEN BOTTLES – "Drinking In The Rain / Lose Every Battle"
Mid-tempo punk rock that reminds of early SOCIAL DISTORTION or like early 80s SoCal bands. Unfortunately, these two tracks kind of plod along with vocals that leave me cold. Maybe it's too talkative for me. The A-side is from their recent LP. Maybe it's the "drinking is the answer" vibe that isn't really my thing. I sense a Bruce double review on the horizon. Ducks on a pond dude. (RL)
(Finger, www.fingerrecords.com)

THE C*NTS – "Eat My Nuts" CD
Hippy punk. Long organ solos and dull love song lyrics. Boring. (CK)
(Disturbing)

CAPITALIST CASUALTIES – CD
Twenty-odd years ago, a friend asked these guys that, considering the musical direction bands from their general locale (the North Bay area) were going in—white-boy bass-slapping funk as lead by PRIMUS—"What is CAPITALIST CASUALITIES playing these days?" Replies the band: "*Total Raging Fucking Thrash Forever!!!*" This is a collection of out of print stuff. Ya know—split EPs, comp. tracks and so forth. Relentless from the first track until track 74 (!). Classic, unforgettable Bay Area thrash, they still play live (sometimes) and aren't a bunch of sell-out bastards. I especially loved the cover of ANTISCHISM's "Greedy Bastards." I never thought I would give a CD release a "must-have," but this is it! (JA)
(Six Weeks)

CAREER SUICIDE / JED WHITEY – split LP
CAREER SUICIDE are reminiscent of BLACK FLAG or CIRCLE JERKS with the early 80s hardcore stylin' and snotty vocals. JED WHITEY is a band I've always had a soft spot for—I'm a sucker for those kinda noodly Detroit-style rock bands. This is an odd combination for a split, but whatever, it works for me. (DP)
(Deranged, PO Box 543, Station P, Toronto, ON M5S 2T1, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

CAST ASIDE – "The Struggle" CD
Now appearing in a cut-out bin near you—this is abysmal tough-guy beat-down straight-edge metalcore from Richmond, VA in the vein of HATEBREED and other bands that have gym memberships and extensive hat collections. You know right now if you like this or not because every note has been done before. I personally think this blows elephant balls but if you like it, you can probably get it for a dollar. (EL)
(Deathwish, www.deathwishinc.com)

CHEECH – "Keep Your Pimp Hand Strong" CD
Super tough guy NYHC style core. Not really my type of music. Burly riffs and gruff vocals; this be fight starting music, if you ask me. Jimmy Gestapo of MURPHY's LAW and Brian from DEATHB4DISHONOR take some turns on the vocal duties. I'll pass. (WM)
(NGS, PO Box 334, Westbont, IL 60559, www.ngsrecords.com)

THE CINCH – "Shake If You Got It" CD
A Dirtnap Records release who are pretty hot these days. A garage- -meets-UK drone pop meets early post punk. Maybe SLEATER KINNEY, DANDY WARHOLS, and WIRE mixed in a blender. Great sound with mostly gal vocals on this strong full length. (RL)
(Dirtnap, www.dirtnaprecs.com)

CIRCLES OVER SIDELIGHTS – "...On Becoming a Person" CD
This Ohio band writes some ambitious metalcore songs that could use a bit of editing, but that still have enough decent ideas to merit interest. Lots of riffs per songs, shifting between that ever-popular DARKEST HOUR Swedish-style metal riffing, open-E breakdown mosh parts and long quiet-to-loud melodic emo passages. Some of the arrangements work better than others—the metal to emo transitions are often of a contrast too deliberate, and the quiet parts kill the momentum of the song at times. If they'd tighten up the songs, make 'em a couple minutes shorter, and preferably, go more metal and less emo—there are enough good riffs here that CIRCLES

OVER SIDELIGHTS could prove a potent band down the road. (EL)
(Immigrant Sun, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

CLOCHARDS – "Kritikken" EP
A live EP by this obscure Danish band from 1980. Can't find anything about them here at the compound, so your guess is as good as mine. The recording is a little muddy but it actually complements the meaty thud punk of these Danes. Not unlike some of the late-70s UK gear like JOHNNY MOPED or the DRONES. Not groundbreaking by any means, but worth a look if you're a fanatic. (TB)
(Mastermind, johnnyconcret8@hotmail.com)

COALESCE – "Give Them Rope She Said" CD
Thick, slow, metallic blasts from this band that I saw way too many times at one too many bad Midwestern "hardcore" fests. I can see the dudes with the bad haircuts and too tight jeans talking now: "*Dude*, they ahsoooo brew-tal!" And the winner of the competition for boringest band is: COALESCE. If you have a beard, bad tattoos and think ACRID or EARTH CRISIS were good bands, then you will probably eat up this pile of shit like a pig at the trough. I'll be in the corner thinking about good the INMATES 12" is. (MT)
(Edison, PO Box 42586, Philadelphia, PA 19101-2586)

COLISEUM – CD
Total departure in sound from what I usually expect from this label (most of the twitchy emo nonsense they put out leaves me cold). This is fucking *blistering*. Full-throttle hardcore, taking the best parts of Swedish hardcore (ANTI-CIMEX/AVSKUM), MOTORHEAD and HIS HERO IS GONE with the tiniest little emo touch. I have been blown away…many hardcore kids will miss this gem 'cos of the label but I recommend tracking this fucker down. (TB)
(Level Plane, PO Box 7926, Charlottesville, VA, 22906)

CONSUME - CD
I thought I'd hate this, but I don't. CONSUME pull off the Political Crust thing as well as anybody, and with more energy than I've heard in a while. This 18 track CD is a compilation of vinyl releases, including their 2 EPs, splits with HELLSHOCK and RESOLVE. (VH)
(Insane Society, PO Box 6, 501 01 Hradec Kralove 2, Czech Republic, www.insanesociety.net)

CORPUS DEI – "My Problem" EP
How about some dark, brooding hardcore from Buffalo, NY? Growling vocals take charge over the down tuned sludgy songs of rage and anger. They pick up the pace on occasion, but this is mostly mid tempo music that wishes it was FROM ASHES RISE. (RC)
(Art Of The Underground, 3234 Main St. Upper, Buffalo, NY 14214,; www.artoftheunderground.com)

THE CRAMPS – "All Tore Up" LP
1980 demos from the lineup of Lux Interior, Poison Ivy, Bryan Gregory and Nick Knox. This is the CRAMPS at their best. Raw and rockin'. Bootleg. Sound quality is good. (CK)
(Revisited)

CRIATURA / DISFACE – split EP
The CRIATURA side of this record intrigued me. There was kind of an atonal central sound with a lot going on around it, and it ended up having a NATION OF USYSSES vibe. DISFACE play a more 90s melodic hardcore with female vocals. It's a decent showing from these two Spanish bands. (DP)
(Malaraza, APD C 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN, www.malaraza.org)

CRIMINALLY INSANE – "Oh My Satan" EP
Utterly incomprehensible one-two feck-you hardcore. The CRIMINALLY INSANE bear some resemblance to *Darby Crash Rides Again*-era POISON IDEA (which I mean as a compliment). Tough stuff for idle hands. The package is decorated with drawing split skulls and Richard "Night Stalker" Ramirez: the band work as a parody of 80s-style genericore while still revving up their gonads in anticipation of the next big kill. (JH)
(Parts Unknown, PO Box 4835, Toms River, NJ 08754, www.partsunknownrecords.com)

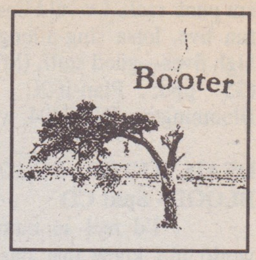
CRISIS WHAT CRISIS – "Christopher Street Day" CD EP
Good German pop punk *a la* the BUZZCOCKS. Lyrics in English. These guys put the song before the sound. Definitely could be something in time with their strong songs. (RL)
(Friendly Cow, www.friendlycow.de)

CRUNCH TIME – "Realness" EP
This is probably my least favorite Lockin' Out release to date. I thought the demo was pretty solid, but I can't get into the vocals on this record at all. At times they remind me of the STRAIGHT YOUTH record, but most of the time they just aren't doing much for me. This record's only saving grace are the WARZONE-esque guitar leads. (CC)
(www.lockinout.com)

CRUNKY KIDS / CHAINSAW – "Far East Meets Mid West" EP
Hardcore from Japan versus hardcore from Ohio—oh, what a challenge. CHAINSAW delivers lots of raging hardcore equipped with loads of metal influenced guitar solos from the Flying V. The Ohio boys' side is much darker and heavier with thrash/thrash tracks keeping true to their sound from prior releases. It's a toss up. (SR)
(Hibachi, 497 Owego St., Painesville, OH 44077-4122)

DR. SPEC'S OPTICAL ILLUSION- "Try To Mess With My Mind / She's The One"
Coughed up from the delta soul and funk hotbed of New Orleans came five fresh faced hopeful's emanating the sound of teenage Texas in a quest for some PAUL REVERE & THE RAIDERS style of fame. Sadly though, one single bares testament to all the broken dreams and a quick return to the crummy nine-to-five. Two organ-driven gems, much in the same vein as the STOICS and a more raucous take on QUESTION MARK & THE MYSTERIANS. I've wanted to hear more of this band ever since hearing the title track on one of the fine *Teenage Shutdown* comps; sadly this however is the entire catalogue. Classic outta control '67-garage punk. (SD)
(Crypt, www.cryptrecords.com)

DAUNTLESS ELITE – "Security?" CD
These UK'ers have definitely have a strong STRIKE ANYWHERE meets ANTI-FLAG meets BY THE GRACE OF GOD feel to them. Energetic, quick-paced, anthemic, slickly-produced (but not annoying) modern-



era punk rock. I would imagine they are quite fun live, lotsa sing-a-longs, stage dives and high fives—good stuff. (MT)
($5 ppd; Plan-it-X, PO Box 3521, Bloomington, IN 47404, www.plan-it-x.com)

DEAD AFTER SCHOOL/CHRISTIAN BLOOD - Split CD
I'd feel so much better about the world if I knew that this CD was a joke... DEAD AFTER SCHOOL sound like HUGGY BEAR playing positive emo-hardcore with a rap-metal twist. Positively nauseating. I'd rather eat my way out of a swimming pool filled with chicken shit than listen to their "I LOVE YOU" youth shouts another time. CHRISTIAN BLOOD are less irritating, but make up for it in the mind-numbing boredom department as they piss out obnoxious Cookie Monster gloom and hackneyed IRON MAIDEN guitar leads. (VH)
(www.catncakeyrecords.com)

DEAD FISH – "Afasia" CD
Good melodic hardcore from Brazil. Portuguese lyrics and good playing make this an interesting enough listen. Reminds a lot of later-period Revelation Records bands. (AD)
(Friendly Cow, Achtestr.9, D-50678, Cologne, GERMANY)

DEADLINE / BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS – split LP
DEADLINE are breathing new life into British street punk. Up-tempo, smart, catchy as hell, and varying in intensity from poppy numbers to almost hardcore, they are a refreshing change from the legions of stale old boring Oi bands out there. The tunes (remember tunes) are well written but it's the singing (remember singing) that really makes DEADLINE stand out. I'm sure they get compared to VICE SQUAD but they're just better... From Chicago, the BRASSKNUCKLE BOYS play fast street punk with a rock 'n' roll flavor and gravelly vocals, kinda like a cross between BONECRUSHER and the GC5. They too manage to steer clear of the plodding Oi pitfall and crank out some good solid tunes including a cover of Tom Petty's "American Girl." Good stuff all round, this stuff was already out there on a few EPs but if you don't have it, pick it up along with anything else you can find by the great DEADLINE. (AD)
(Haunted Town, 1658 N. Milwaukee Ave. #169 Chicago, IL 60647)

DEADLOCK FREQUENCY – "Traffic" CD
Dark, edgy hardcore from the Colorado region of America. Rushing riffs and soaring leads, heavy bass lines, raw throated vocals, sporadic bits of noise, moody breakdowns with creepy buried vocals; reminds me very much of NEUROSIS. (WM)
(Not Bad, PO BOX 371292, Denver, CO 80237)

DEAD MOON – "Dead Ahead" LP
Ahhh, the MOON. Lord fuckin love 'em. This band define the term "cult band" with their troupe of fanatic followers. Love 'em or hate 'em, they'll never go away. On paper, this band *sucks*; simple, low-fi garage lite with weird shrill almost hippy-esque vocals played by an aging long-haired ex-60s rocker with a moon tattooed on his face. Jesus. Thing is...they *rule*. There is something in the songwriting that makes the hair on the back of your neck stand up. While this LP isn't quite as good as the last, it still has those MOON classics, and as with all their stuff its worth having. (TB)
(Tombstone, PO Box, 1463, Clackamas, OR 97015)

DEADSERAPHIM - "Discography" CD
As the title states, this is a discography of this squirrelly screamo band that put out a few releases from 2000-2002. The songs are from their self-titled EP and the splits with MONTCALM and DROWNING IN LETHE. DEADSERAPHIM are no longer around, but this CD captures 15 songs with the chaotic squealing guitars, erratic rhythms and screeching vocals you would expect to find here. (RC)
(The Electric Human Project, 500 South Union Street, Wilmington, DE 19805, www.electrichumanproject.com)

DEATHSQUAD – "1939" EP
Raging, guitar-driven hardcore from the New York area. Yelled vocals buried under mountains of guitars and thick bass—the drums could've been mixed just a little higher, thinks me. Like a less power-violent DROPDEAD (the rushing guitar sound) against BORN/DEAD. In between the songs are experimental sound pieces that work nice for their hardcore power. I'd like to hear more from these fellows. (WM)
(Bonus Choke, 4066 Becker Road, Altamont, NY 12009)

DEATHTOLL – EP
Short, loud and to the motherfucking point. Burly bay area veterans lay down six tracks of absolutely brutal start-and-stop blasts of mid-80s slightly-metallic hardcore punk. Angry-as-hell lyrics spit out over the thick, mid-range aural assault that makes this one of the best punk records to come out so far this year. (NT)
(Kangaroo, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo)

DECONDITIONED – "Overpopulation Begins and Ends With You" EP
Sloppy crazed thrash with vocals that sound like the singer is trying to chase the rest of the band down the street trying to catch up. Awesome! Nothing new musically or lyrically (bikes, reproductive rights, fashionable dweebs at shows) but they seem to have fucking heart put into what they are doing—and that is fine by me! Can't wait for the next release. (NT)
($4.50 ppd, B.E., 2706 Harvard Ave. E., Seattle, WA 98102)

DETENTION "Too Noisy (Live 1984)" EP
7" issue of the DETENTION cassette tracks from the 1984 Bad Compilation Tapes compilation. Includes their classic "Dead Rockers." New Jersey punk (I am sure I remember them being called "hardcore" back in the day) that is melodic and fun. "Too Noisy" is an ode to playing a party and having the neighbors call the cops. Great stuff, and the sound quality is excellent. (CK)
(Ponk-111, PO Box 115488, Oakland, CA 94611)

DETONATIONS – "Static Vision" LP
Propulsive, new-wavey garage rock 'n' roll here. Everything's distorted—even the vocals... it gives the whole thing a nice raw edge. I don't really know how often I'd listen to this to be honest—there's not much to distinguish one song from the next. I bet a DETONATIONS show is one big party though. (AM)
(Alive, PO Box 7112, Burbank, CA 91510; www.alive-totalenergy.com)

DIE YOUNG – "The Message" CD
Mediocre CATHARSIS-worship from Houston. The singer is an absolute dead-ringer for Brian, and so are his lyrics, and that's too bad cuz he's missing the point of Brian's message of finding your own voice—not *his* voice. Really, not much of this is very compelling or memorable—this lacks the musical creativity that made CATHARSIS such an engaging band. I just kept waiting for the record to be over. (EL)
(Immigrant Sun, PO Box 150711, Brooklyn, NY 11215)

DIRECT CONTROL – "Religious Rampage" EP
Holy shit this record is awesome. This is so good smoke is literally coming off the turntable (well...not literally). Fans of anything early 80s Nardcore (ILL REPUTE especially) would be doing themselves a serious injustice by not buying this immediately. The guitar tone alone gives me goose bumps. This is easily the best thing I got to review this month. Damn. (CC)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA, Amsterdam, HOLLAND)

THE DIRTY FINGERS – Rock 'n' Roll Ain't Easy" EP
This three song EP is right in line with their debut three song EP: "Only Perverts Play Rock 'n' Roll." This in-your-face, hopped-up rawk 'n' roll is dumb for dumb's sake, and it rocks! Good EP. (HM)
(Riff Raff, 12004 Robin Dr, Catharpin, VA 20143, www.fandangorecs.com/dirtyfingers)

DIRTY FINGERS – "Rock 'n' Roll Ain't Easy" EP
The EP title says it all; this is rock 'n' roll first and foremost. It also happens to be a pretty damn good punk rock record. This is rock 'n' roll LAZY COWGIRLS style. Put simply, it's mid-tempo, traditional, punk rock with some serious rock 'n' roll influences and even some Americana in it. In addition to sounding

like the LAZY COWGIRLS in general, the vocals are eerily similar. I might also draw a DEAD BOYS comparison. Man, this is really good. Highly recommended. (KK)
(Riff Raff, 12004 Robin Dr., Catharpin, VA 20413, www.fandangorecs.com/dirtyfingers)

DISHWASHERS – "Rock and Roll Will Save Your Soul" EP
Judging form the MISFITS meet Robert Smith look of this band, the last thing I expected from this record was the sweet raw garage pop that I got. Actually, they could be the MISFITS of garage because their songs are about monsters, but they could never be scary like the MISFITS. I like this band. (DP)
(www.thedishwashers.com)

DISTRICT – "My Babies Number" EP
The A side of this 45 is one fine dose of late-70s styling power pop. Many bands bore me with this type of stuff, but Germany's DISTRICT manage to keep me entertain for the duration of the song. The flip is a dub song that is done good enough to not be out of place next to the RUTS' or STIFF LITTLE FINGERS' ventures into the same territory. Good work,. and I look forward to hearing more. (JF)
(I Used To Fuck People Like You In Prison Records" Schaferstrasse 33a, D-44147 Dortmund, GERMANY)

DOLIUM – "Driving With The Deathettes" EP
Two songs by this mystery band—a 7" record and plastic bag is all I've got to go on. The first song's got kind of a cool repetitive bluesy groove crossed with some sorta JESUS LIZARD sound. The second song picks up the pace in the same style as the first, but sounds more goth. I don't know man, there's something very suspicious about this record, hmmm maybe because it sounds like, oh God yuck, this sounds like MARILYN MANSON!!! Crappy record, great Frisbee. (AS)
(Parlour,www.parlou9.co.uk)

DOWNSLIDE – "Nowhere to Hide" CD
I'll admit it. I opened up the CD case and saw the big "Straight Edge 2004" emblazoned on the packaging and cringed. Then I popped the CD to be greeted with spat-out snarly vocals and some thrashing hardcore—pleasantly surprised, I was. Then the breakdowns came in, and then they came in and then they came in and then they came in and then they came in…you get the point. All energy the CD has just gets lost in one mosh part after another. Listen here my fellow X'd up brothers and sisters, just because you don't drink, do drugs, and can bench your weight doesn't mean that your music has to have its energy sucked out of it by breakdown after breakdown. I mean look at LÄRM, STRAIGHT AHEAD, INFEST (okay so they weren't really sXe—but you get the point). Make an effort! Show your hardware! Step on it! Thrash! Thrash! Thrash! Not bad, but really, not as good a showing as it could be. Fucking go-whoa-whoa-ooo!! (MT)
(Crucial Response, Kaiserfeld, 46047, Oberhausen, GERMANY, www.crucialresponse.com)

DROPDEAD / LOOK BACK AND LAUGH – split EP
Wow, DROPDEAD somehow got faster. Only one song of the six on their side of this amazing split is not full-on blast speed virtually the whole way through. I don't know what I can say about these guys that hopefully everyone doesn't already know- it really doesn't get any more intense than DROPDEAD, and they're just getting better. I love that the vocals are somehow catchy and scream-along-able too. As for LOOK BACK AND LAUGH, they're a top contender for best current Bay Area hardcore band and they've only been around a little over a year. Raging hardcore with vicious vocals, solid drumming, and guitarists flying through the air. This is a great pairing of the best of veteran and newcomer—these two will have just finished a West Coast tour together by the time you read this, and you, my dear friend, are a damn fool if you missed it. (EL)
(Armageddon, PO Box 56, Providence, RI 02901, info@armageddonshop.com)

ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN / THE STRAP-ONS / THE FUX / MORAL MINORITY - split EP
I'm not a real big fan of compilations that don't seem to have any real common thread, outside of the type of music. Each band contributes one track. All seem to be some combination of traditional punk and hardcore and all are good tracks—but none are really compelling on their own, which makes the entire effort even less compelling. I suppose if you are a huge fan of any of these bands, you might want to pick this up. Otherwise, I can't think of a reason you might want it. (KK)
(Valiant Death, 22543 James River Dr., Carrollton, VA, 23314, www.valiantdeath.com)

THE ENABLERS / BEDFORD FALLS – split EP
Two tracks of gravelly blue-collar rock from the ENABLERS, sounding like it was fed a healthy diet of Pabst, factory closures and Bruce Springsteen. A lot of times this sound goes right over my head, but fortunately the ENABLERS have that something special, conviction and an illusion that they did grow up in Skintsville, America, stood in the unemployment line and rocked out to Steve Earle on a battered 'ol couch on a rickety 'ol porch. I'm gonna roll the sleeves of my jean jacket and play this one 'til I'm sick off it. England's BEDFORD SCIENCE do every thing by the book, all's in place, strong vocals, tight sound, the playing top-notch, but like their fellow countrymen LEATHERFACE, nothing sticks, no humming this on the way to work, no belting out these numbers while scrubbing the barnacles off your back. Very No Idea, and I do believe with a bit more edge they could be damn good. (SD)
(Newest Industry, Unit 100, 61 Wellfield Road, Cardiff, CF24 3DG, WALES)

ENTRAILS MASSACRE – "Crucial Strikes with Attitude" CD
All right this CD is good, but first things first—what the fuck is with the album cover? Could this be the worst artwork ever? A photo of a sneaker pressing a distortion pedal that's meant to be detonating a bomb? A big poofy white Nike at that? Guys come on—that is l-a-m-e lame. Sorry, had to be done, now on to the music—this is totally ripping full-speed blasting grind from Germany. Short fast full-throttle songs that never let up for a second, this is very well executed grind for fans of CATHETER, PHOBIA, SANITY'S DAWN and the genre in general. Now I'm bummed I missed them on their recent tour out here. (EL)
(RSR, c/o Sandro Gessner, Strasse des Friedens 45, 07819 Mittelpoellnitz, GERMANY, skrupel@web.de)

THE ERGS! – "Dorkrockcorkrod" CD
Who are these guys? Nerd and proud! An awesome trio cranking out pop punk and power pop. Along the

ways of the old Cleveland MICE and the YUMS YUMS. Maybe a bit thrashier. Fans of retro power pop and fun punk gotta get this! (RL)
(Whoa Oh, 21-36 43rd, 3rd Floor, Astoria, NY 11105)

FDS / SKRACK- split LP

FDS privy us to a live recording from Hanger 10 in São Paulo. While the gruff Brazilian vocals give this an edge, they are really just normal stop-and- go thrash. Not a stand-out band. Now, SKRACK on the other hand, while seeming to play average slow hardcore/punk throw in such a variety of different musical directions we are left wondering "what is this genius?" Great words on great subjects; cops and punks. We wonder who SKRACK sound like, but are left in a lurch. Because they are just great Brazilian punk with a big pre-1985 USA hardcore/CHEETAH CHROME MOTHERFUCKERS influence. (JA)
(Rodel, Keule Sternkicker, Allmendeweg 65A, 13 509 Berlin, GERMANY)

THE FE FI FO FUMS – "Electrofize Me / Wild One"

This band brings me back to the San Francisco of the early 90s. Rock and roll, which although recorded poorly, still sounds great because the songs are so hot. I won't compare them to the MUMMIES or SUPERCHARGER cos I seem to remember someone telling me they really hate that in Renton, but you get the idea. They are even endorsed by Michael Lucas. I really like the idea of made up words in songs, but "Wild One" is the hit. It could easily be a FUN THINGS cover. Fun, fun, fun. (CK)
(Boom Boom Of Renton, 2072 SE 192nd St., Renton, WA 98058)

FIVE POINTERS – "Did the Whole World Smile Back at You" EP

A 7" slab of fun, raw, mid-tempo punk from Irving, Texas. The members of this band are obviously very young (the bass player being the only admitted 14-year-old according to the liner notes) and as a result the music clearly benefits from a large dose of overbearing youthfulness and sincerity. Plus, when one sits down to read the lyrics and descriptions of these songs, you get even more of a sense that these kids are learning a few things by growing up punk. "I basically decided one day that I could no longer claim to be anti-sexist and own porn," vocalist Andrew Savage admits in his description of the song "Porno Guilt." The music is universally fast and guitar driven, at times sounding like a *very* young, very pissed version of the DESCENDENTS. I will be *really* curious to see what these guys will be up to in a few years. (SP)
($4.00 ppd; Hey Joker!, 430 Hanover Ln., Irving, TX 75062, www.heyjokerrecords.com)

FUCKED UP / HAYMAKER – split EP

FUCKED UP sound like early POISON IDEA. Unless you've had your head in the clouds for the last year, then you already know how good this Canadian band is. The crew here at *MRR* has already showered this band with endless amounts of praise, so anything I say will just be overkill. Check 'em out, and I promise you won't be disappointed. On the other side of the record we have HAYMAKER. They have much more produced, metallic sound, but still manage to keep things punk. Both of these recordings I guess are from 2002. Good record, but unfortunately I can't find a lyric sheet. Hmmm…(CC)
(Deep Six)

GODING'S SAWED-OFF – "Delivered To A Dead Father" EP

So what am I, the grind *and* emo reviewer now?! Just kidding. I hope. What we have here is an odd band from upstate New York mixing emo and metal. They get points for modest originality and I'm struggling to think of a band in comparison, but really neither the fast hardcore parts nor the melodic emo-y elements do much for me. The playing's good and the shouting's on, but something about these songs still makes me cringe—more go, less 'mo. (EL)
(Too Circle, 221-3 Hi-home kodaira 510, Nakamachi, Kodaira-city #187-0042, Tokyo, JAPAN, toocir@xd5.so-net.ne.jp)

GOSPEL / KODAN ARMADA – split 10"

GOSPEL: twangy guitars with lots of leads *a la* Tonie Joy (UNIVERSAL ORDER OF ARMAGEDDON, MOSS ICON, et. al.) and vocals that remind me a lot of TWELVE HOUR TURN and CROWNHATE RUIN (one singer is a dead ringer for the CHR vocalist). There's also a great song on here with a long, drawn-out intro with vocals sounding very much like DUSTER meets ENVY. Lots of originality, lots of urgency and an overall driving sound make for a good set of songs. KODAN ARMADA sounds like any number of late-90s screamo bands: YOU AND I, SAETIA, etc. They know what they want to sound like and they pull it off well, with all the right hooks, bells and whistles, and stellar production. Nice, but I prefer the slightly more ambitious GOSPEL side of this record just a bit more. Either way, a surprisingly good split 10". (SP)
(Neon Boombox, lovethatshit@yahoo.com)

GOVERNMENT ISSUE – "First Demo 1980" EP

The early DC scene always fascinates me because it was a totally new thing evolving amidst the remaining fashion cults of late 70s punk. Lots of these guys still loved the UK punk sound, and old photos of the pre-Dischord days show scads of kids who wouldn't have been out of place at a CHELSEA or UK SUBS show. Then these guys—still appreciating the punk sound they loved, starting playing a little bit faster, and writing lyrics that weren't repeating new wave cliché but were more personal and recognizable as an honest exchange between band and audience. Other bands were doing the same thing, while also ramping up energy levels without losing the necessary song structure. They got to keep things they valued from 70s punk, ditched the "junkie bullshit" and probably felt like they were doing something totally fresh and new every day. This record, Mr. and Mrs. Audience, is early 80s American youth culture personified. (RW)
(Spontaneous Combustion, www.spontaneous.com)

HANDSOME STRANGLERS - "Mad Man Stomp / Carnal Cry"

Wait just a cotton pickin' minute, boys: the sleeve clearly says "b/w" and that means "backed with," whereas both of these stomping bits of bad attitude (obvious reference point is CRAMPS, but this has considerably more flair than most bands trying to mine that vein) are on the same side! Other than that, good job. (DD)
(Henrik Hogberg, Stortloppsvagen 16, SE-129 47, Hagersten, SWEDEN, www.handsomestranglers.com)

HEADACHE CITY – "Knee Jerk Reaction" EP

I think Shit Sandwich have tapped into some hidden mother lode of new wave that some others have been looking for but have not quite found. HEADACHE CITY is the latest release by this label and it will not disappoint fans of the FUSES and the EPOXIES. (DP)
(Shit Sandwich, 3107 N Rockwell, Chicago, IL 60618, www.shitsandwichrecords.com)

HEARTATTACKS – "Challenge You / Let's Go Rock 'n' Roll"

If you pine for the early sound of the Rip Off Records stable, like say the PROBLEMATICS (yeah, that's it), then this is the discus for you. Both tracks are rockin' through the muffled production, and espouse a topic-free lyrical lifestyle for all. Shut up and dance! (RW)
(Savage, Farstavagen 89 (8tr), 123 34 Farsta, SWEDEN)

THE HIGGINS – "Who The Fuck Are You?" CD

Aaaaaaaah! I don't understand. I have neither the education nor the musical knowledge to tell you what is happening here. Lets try. Swirl up the best choruses of the EXPLOITED and the vocals of Steve Ignorant and Jesse Michaels (OPERATION IVY). The music is brutally early SUBHUMANS meets very-early British streetpunk. Sparse and not overproduced. Simple and good. The lyrics are…silly? I love this for its quirkiness. I feel that fans of both SCHLONG and CONFLICT will enjoy this (JA)
(MSM 1279, PO Box 91, 90576 Langenzenn, GERMANY)

HOLY MOUNTAIN – "Bloodstains Across

Your Face" LP

Hardcore with the power and intensity of FROM ASHES RISE, with the raspy vocals replaced by lower pitched anger-driven yells and callings. Plus, there's an amazing cover of CRASS' "Big Hands." This is fucking excellent! (SR)

(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604; www.noidearecords.com)

HORROR SHOW– "Horror Show the Holiday" EP

I swear, every Deathwish record I review has like the best sound ever. How is that?! And why isn't Carl Cordova reviewing this record? This is right up his alley! Total East Coast hardcore with a clear posi, early 80s influence. Sorta like KILL YOUR IDOLS meets BY THE GRACE OF GOD meets YOUTH OF TODAY? Nothing particularly original, but just about the best you can play this style without beating it into the ground. Plus, the vocals are at the point of complete collapse, which is always cool. Stereotypically hardcore but still a great listen. (SP)

(Deathwish, www.deathwishinc.com)

HOSENFEFER – "Knife in My Back" EP

HOSENFEFER, hailing from Kosovo, pipes in with seven rockin' punkers that somehow recall '83-ish kick-ass French punk. This stuff relies on interesting power chords and shouted, almost anthemic lyrics, backed by no-nonsense production. Very strong, and also limited to only 500 numbered copies. (SS)

(www.geocities.com/tan89rds/)

HUMAN KAOS – "Nothing Kills Better Than a Spiritual Surrender" CDEP

This release is amazing. The packaging itself is enough to put it on a top ten list, it's seriously a work of art: A folded cardboard case covered in type which opens up and to reveal five individual cards with lyrics to each of the songs (one side in English the other side in French), and if that wasn't enough, it's limited to 500 hand-numbered copies! Fuck, it's great, I feel like I just opened a Christmas gift. Musically, HUMAN KAOS play half dark- and-heavy molten hardcore infused with half sped-up mid-tempo stuff. HUMAN KAOS sound like it should be on Prank records—it totally reminds me of INITIAL STATE or KYLESA. If you can find this, get it. It's rad. (AS)

(Maldorar, c/o Car Quai Jules Chagot, 71300 Montceau les Mines, FRANCE)

HUMAN ORDER – "Parasite" EP

Yeah, that's right. This was recorded onto eight-track analog. And it really sounds it. *That's the sound of punk, fucker!* It is apparent that this crusty thrash outfit from Wisconsin knows their politics and love the beasts who are treated as meats. Passionate in a way rarely heard these days. If punk should be raw and caring, this is it. (JA)

(Cataclysm, PO Box 85, Twin Lakes, WI. 53181)

HUMAN ORDER / SHACKLES AWAIT – split 10"

Gnarled, down-tuned crust roaring intensity with female vocals—who reminds me of Felicia from the mighty, mighty DESPISE YOU—and male vox. A nice contrast that really gives HUMAN ORDER a more brutal intensity than your average growly male-vocaled crust does. Musically, they play what you would come to expect from this style of music, nothing new or updated, just simple furious crust the way it should be. SHACKLES AWAIT, on the flip, are far more furious musically than their split-mates. Thick, dark, brooding crust-influenced hardcore with a melodic edge that pummels and brutalizes like no one's business, they would fit well with the Prank Records roster of crushing hardcore. Great political lyrics from both bands. A DIY release. (WM)

(shacklesawait666@yahoo.com)

HUNCHES – "Fuck Disco Beats" EP

Like their forebears from several decades back, the HUNCHES firmly believe that enough feedback and hoarse shouting will destroy the disco plague, even as it infects their own chosen club land venue. Too late, kids. The track "When I Became You" is the clear standout on this three-tracker, featuring a guitar sound that absolutely defies jaded predictions (now he'll solo…No? Huh! What key is that, anyway?) and features a nouveau ONLY ONES-on-cough-syrup vibe that could possibly win over those who were never sold on the REATARDS style of attack. If their new LP is full of *this* noise…(RW)

(In The Red, PO Box 50777, LA, CA, 90050)

HUNCHES – "Hobo Sunrise" LP

The HUNCHES are perfect cross between the noisier of the In the Red bands (PIRANAHAS, HOSPITALS, FUSE, etc.) and the cleaner acts like the PONYS and the MYSTERY GIRLS. Basically, what it comes out sounding like is some amped-up distorted GUN CLUB that is music to my ears. Besides, I bet you they are the best band going today in which a member sports a SOIA tattoo. (JF)

(In the Red)

IMPULSE MANSLAUGHTER - "Live at WFMU" CD

Tough, heavy, fast East Coast hardcore from the late 80s/early 90s crossover scene. From "Blanket of Fear" to "Drink Smoke Vomit" this 37 track CD compiles EP, LP, comp, and outtake tracks with a live radio broadcast from '93. The live tracks sound great, but don't let the title "Live at WFMU" mislead you. They only make up a third of the CD. (VH)

(Beer City, PO Box 26035, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0035)

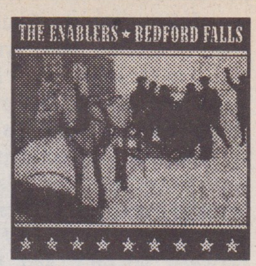
INNER CONFLICT – "Anschlusstreffer" CD

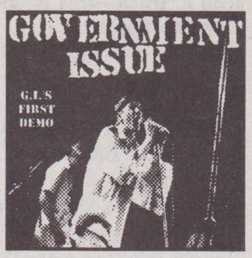
Dark, metallic punk with dual male and female vocals. Some of the songs are in German and some in English. The music is thick and heavy, in contrast to the sung vocals (the girl's voice especially). There's a definite hint of LEATHERFACE in the guitar, but not nearly as much melody. Overall they sound pretty good, but I can't help feeling that the songs need more of a hook to make them catchy enough to stick in my head. (AM)

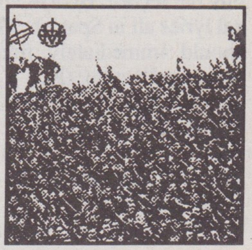
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY; www.twistedchords.de)

JOHN WILKES BOOZE – "Five Pillars of Soul" LP

I read the syllabus, so I understand the title: the five pillars are T-REX frontman Mark Bolan, actor/director Melvin Van Peebles, 70s pop-culture phenom Patty "Tania" Hearst, ever-lovin' Yoko Ono, and saxophonist Albert Ayler. Some of them musicians, others not. All of them dear to JOHN WILKES BOOZE. This LP collects material from five previous CDs, each







one dedicated to the figure who inspired the band to knit up their own wacky racket and take it to the streets. *Five Pillars of Soul* highlights what are the better tracks on the CDs (hopefully) and takes its high concept to a dizzying altitude—sometimes it works, sometimes I say "no." I dig "Marc Bolan Makes Me Want to Fuck, Pt. II" over deranged lullabyes like "Butcher's Tale." *Five Pillars* wavers between art-funk and loose-limbed indie noise—in fact, it's all over the place all at once. At least the band are wanking toward a common goal. (JH)
(Kill Rock Stars, 120 NE State Ave. #418, Olympia, WA, www.killrockstars.com)

THE JOLT – CD
This took me a year or two to track down on CD but it was worth the wait. Classic guitar mod from these Brits circa 1978. Possibly the third-best mod revival band from that era behind the JAM and the CHORDS. Certainly in the top eight, and that was a killer scene! Included is the LP, singles and b-sides. Although there is a vinyl bootleg of this stuff around, this has great liner notes and great sound quality. Plus the band sees some of the money! Great. (RL)
(Captain Mod, www.captainoi.com)

JUGGLING JUGULARS – "Nothing's Finished" CD
This Finnish band has been around for years but this is the first time I've ever heard them, and I must say I'm impressed. They make me think of a faster harder (fellow Scandinavians) DRUNK and LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? Great high-tempo hardcore punk, melodic yet interesting, it even brings to mind RUDIMENTARY PENI (from whom they may or may not have gotten their name) at times. Good political lyrics, male and female (I think) vocals and enough hooks to keep it afloat—this is good shit. I'll be back for more. (AD)
(Twisted, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY)

KAI RAY – "I Want Some of That / Trashman's Blues"
The A-side has been comped plenty, but anti-social DJs should jump at the chance to have this completely batty exotica rocker (alias "Jungle Talk") on a 45. The flip, sort of a bluesier cousin of "Muleskinner Blues," is legendary for being the source of the TRASHMEN's (and hence, ultimately, the TRASHWOMEN's) moniker. (DD)
(Norton)

KARNVAPEN ATTACK – "Secretos, Mentiras, Enajencion" EP
Strong, fast and energetic punk from Spain that goes ballistic from the second the needle hits the record. Hoarse vocals spew out political lyrics all in Spanish. This one is on fire, and should immediately find a way into your record collection. (RC)
(Mala Raza, PO Box 6037, 50080 Zaragoza, SPAIN)

KILL THE HIPPIES – "Jerked Off By Strangers" EP
Well, these guys have a good band name, a good record name, good lyrics and play a variety of good styles. They deliver solid tunes with quality execution sounding anywhere from the FEEDERZ to the BUZZCOCKS and beyond! Solid debut. (HM)
(www.killthehippies.cjb.net)

KILL YOUR IDOLS – "Live at CBGBs" CD
Well, I would think that by now most hardcore kids should be familiar with the rock-solid hardcore stylings of KILL YOUR IDOLS, but is a live recording really necessary? Granted, it is at CBGB's and all, and the quality is decent, but unless you were there I rarely see the point in live releases. And of course they do a SHEER TERROR cover, but in the end I think I will stick with KILL YOUR IDOLS' studio releases. (RC)
(Ass-Card, Annenstr. 5, 44137 Dortmund, GERMANY, www.asscardrecords.com)

L.A.'S MORAL DECAY "Die for Nothing" CD
Almost straight-forward crusty street punk thrash, more like CRUCIFIX than the EXPLOITED. More DRI than DYSTOPIA. Average, uninspired lyrics. If this band stays together a few more years they should become something memorable. As long as they stay away from the Hot Topic/Warp Tour ghetto. Something to remember, guys: the chorus "depression got a hold of me, depression got to break free" has already been used by a band. They were called BLACK FLAG. (JA)
(Glue Accident)

LEFT ALONE – "Lonely Starts & Broken Hearts" CD
Rousing singalong punk rock. Totally unoriginal but fun nonetheless. (AD)
(Smelvis, PO Box 1779, Wimington, CA 90744)

THE LOCOMOTIONS – "Teacher" EP
Led by Martin Savage—formerly of one my faves the BLACKS—this is Swedish power pop. Well, the music and the songs are. The vocals somehow don't get to that sugary pop harmony style. They are too gruff and scratchy. It must have been all that screeching in the past that wore them out. Trashy with pop stylings. They may be on to something. Great stuff. (CK)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

LOS RETARDOS – "Fresh Trash" LP
LOS RETARDOS from Denmark play some pretty straight-forward punk rock with some good hooks and chunky parts and lyrics about the usual stuff (girls, drinkin', fightin'). If you take away all the mid-to-slow tempo songs, there's enough on here for a good EP. (DP)
(Rocking Retard, www.losretardos.dk)

LOVE SONGS – "All Branches No Trunk" CD
A few years after LOVE SONGS debut, Craigums (YOUR MOTHER, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?) has this band up to speed. This is a more mature (can Craig be considered mature?), focused sound than the first CD, but it still has Craig's wacky themes, silly sense of humor and solid song writing all wrapped up in a fine package. A stupendous sophomoric release. (HM)
(New Disorder, www.thelovesongs.com, www.newdisorder.com)

MK ULTRA / LOS CRUDOS – split EP
Last gasps from the grave from these two long-defunct legends. If you haven't heard of these bands...where the fuck have you been? This release was meant to come out as a flexi in '99, so five years later it comes out and what a great trip down memory lane. Turning hardcore on its head in the 90s, both bands played out-of-control frenetic hardcore with super-smart lyrics (CRUDOS' entirely in Spanish, per usual). If it wasn't for these bands DIY hardcore wouldn't be what it is today. Recorded five years ago, it blows away most of what's around today. Mandatory. (TB)
(Leguna Armada)

MR. CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE – "I Wanna Kill The Mentally Ill" EP
A one-sided 7" from the ever-prolific MR.CALIFORNIA & THE STATE POLICE, purveyor of nerve-wrecking, damaged,stupid punk rock. The lyrics are as asinine as ever, and the music still resembles nails scratching a blackboard as played by BLACK FLAG if they were the BOREDOMS "Anus to Anus" era. Overall the whole thing is genius, but I wouldn't recommend them to everyone. (WM)
(Proud To Be Idiot, PO Box 410325, San Francisco, CA 94141-0325, www.ptbi.8m.com)

MALPRACTICE – "Stab Wounds" CD
Good and unpretentious anthemic punk rock from Detroit with lyrics about violence in the city, religion, and fallen friends. The first song threw me off, but I quickly changed my mind as the catchy guitar riffs and tough shout-out choruses sung by a straightforward un-snotty vocalist grew on me quickly by the end. Cutting out the terrible back-up vocals would make it oh-so much easier to love this whole-heartedly. (SR)
(34210 Winslow, Wayne, MI 48184; www.malpracticepunk.com)

MENTALLY ILL- "Gacy's Place: the Undiscovered Corpses" LP
As collector scum might guess, this LP features the sessions from which the *Gacy's Place* 7" sprung, with tracks from two other recording sessions (four tracks have new vocal tracks, though I never would have guessed if the liners didn't note it). Result: a whole lot (20 tracks) of that good ole art-damaged punk. Snappy pull quote: Listen to at the risk of your sanity! (DD)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com)

MIGRA VIOLENTA / KONTRAÁTTAQUE - "De La Obscuridad

De La Opresion, La Luz De La Rebelion..." split EP

Argentina's MIGRA VIOLENTA team up with SoCal's own KONTRAÁTTAQUE on this split EP. For their side, KONTRAÁTTAQUE (who actually broke up in 2000, soon after these songs were recorded) lay down four ripping thrashers with a slight grind edge at time—backing up lyrics dealing with the frightening power the INS has in making immigrants disappear, how the US views Latin America as its imperial plaything, child abuse and the importance of family roots in Latino families. On the flip, MIGRA VIOLENTA pound out four tracks of rampaging furious hardcore that sounds akin to the later MK-ULTRA stuff. Good stuff all around. (MT)
(Subversive Rhymes, PO Box 39432, Downey, CA 90239, subrhymes@yahoo.com)

MIHOEN – EP

This steaming hot Dutch outfit takes its social protest seriously, with a great cardboard foldout lyric sheet (and even some text in English). Stylistically, their songs are similar in intensity to the NEOS, with stinging sandpaper vocals and a relentless stop-on-a-dime HC attack. Outstanding, sharp-edged stuff—strongly recommended. (SS)
(Trabuc, Utrechtseweg 305, 3731 GA De Blit, THE NETHERLANDS)

MISTAKE – "Fuck Everything Up" CD

Members of EIGHTEEN VISIONS and THROWDOWN deliver 11 tracks of anger and rage, direct from the cookie cutter. It's hectic and dirty, uglier and faster than most HC of this genre, which is all great. But they fall short of "fucking everything up"... (VH)
(Prime Directive)

MUGA – LP

Hailing from Japan, MUGA's debut LP (which has been available on some time on CD) seriously sounds like what should have been the final HIS HERO IS GONE LP, the transition between the dark, stomping drive of that Tennessee powerhouse, and the more melodic yet still crushing assault of the band they morphed into, TRAGEDY. Totally potent stuff here—tuneful, melodic hardcore that moves along at a quick clip, yet retains a slightly ominous, gloomy edge that keeps it from sounding too cheery. Great!) (MT)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmö, SWEDEN, www.putridfilth.com)

MY REVENGE / F.P.O. – split EP

This is great split EP between two solid hardcore bands. I only have one question: When did MY REVENGE start sounding like INFEST? I am certainly not complaining, but the last three tracks on their side remind me of something off the second INFEST LP (especially "Achieving Madness"). The flip side of this split contains a fast, thrashy outfit from Macedonia. It's obvious that English isn't their first language, but the sheer intensity of these six songs more than makes up for it. (CC)
(Third Party, 21 Nancy Lane, Amherst, NY 14228)

MY SO-CALLED BAND – "Weapons of Mass Distortion" CD

Hey, I remember these guys, I reviewed them a year or so ago. Cool straightforward punk rock from that international center of culture—Charlotte, North Carolina. The music's fun, mid-tempo and guitar-heavy, but it was their lyrics that really caught my eye. They're not what you would call a "political" band, yet they write some of the best political lyrics I've read in some time—made all the better as they're not just blowin' smoke to be part of some cool sub-genre. Great songs about the Patriot Act, Rachel Corrie, Iraq ("WMD"), and the redundancy of the two party political system, and more, all sung over tough, driving three-chord punk. I like these guys! (AD)
(SW, PO Box 9599, Charlotte, NC 28299 www.mysocalledband.com)

THE NEINS – "Skinny Black Jeans / B. Gordy"

Poppy, HEADCOATS-ish dirty rock from Portland. Pretty catchy stuff. The bs-side is unfortunately very organ-driven. It'd be better if they were called NEIN NEIN NEIN, don't you think? (AM)
(6319 NE 32nd Pl., Portland, OR 97211, www.theneins.com)

NIKOTINA / DRUNKARDS – split EP

NIKOTINA, hailing from Italy, pound and blaze a wall of crusty/power-violence hardcore, with two vocalists, one high and one ultra-low. Their riffs hold a touch of INFEST influence. Their tracks were recorded back in 1998, and from what I can tell they were only together for that one year. Not bad, but I wouldn't say mandatory. The DRUNKARDS side is another creature altogether. They could've been on one of the BCT international tape comps from 1984-'85. This is really great, simple but catchy, hardcore with a strong presence from the bass, even though the recordings sound like they were in a garage at the time. They remind your humble reviewer of a faster, and much less poppy, UNEXPECTED meets the manic PUTRID FEVER. Really good stuff. (WM)
(Narcotic Holocaust, c/o Paolo Grassi, via De Giorgi 16, 15100 Alessandria, 0131/254647, ITALY, www.narcoticholocaust.com)

NOT VERY GOOD – "Forget Me Hot" EP

This band wins the Truth in Advertising Award for this issue. NOT VERY GOOD range from just that to the truly bad. At their best, NOT VERY GOOD are a mediocre melodic punk band that resembles a poor man's NOFX. At their worst, NVG are the type of band you keep playing at 45 to see if the songs sound better, and if they don't at least they are done faster. (JF)
(www.notverygood.org)

OKMONIKS – "Whatcha Gonna Do?" EP

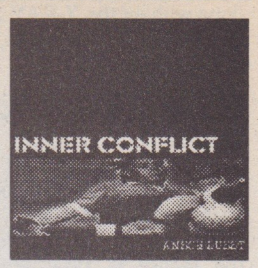
One of my biggest disappointments of this year was showing up late to the Hemlock and missing the OKMONIKS. The OKMONIKS are a 60s-style garage band with keyboards and female vocals and lotsa lo-fi attitude. Please come back to SF! (DP)
(722 E 9th Street, Tucson, AZ 85719)

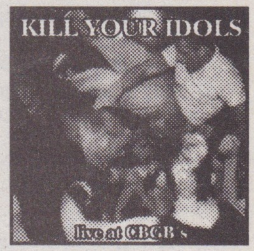
ONLY CRIME – "To The Nines" CD

A hardcore supergroup, members-wise. Folks from GOOD RIDDANCE, BANE, GWAR, and HAGFISH plus Bill Stevenson on drums. This reminds me of the DAG NASTY era when bands could rock and still have a tune. A strong melodic hardcore release with some punch. (RL)
(Fat Wreck Chords)

OPERATION S – LP

Cecelia, formerly of the NO TALENTS, fronts this band. Most of the garage rock feel of the aforementioned band is absent here, replaced by a more new wave feel. Catchy, keyboard-driven punk, with quite a bit of charm. Some of the edgier tougher tracks on side B really stand out. Sung in French. A pretty nifty LP, but I could have





done without the X-RAY SPEX cover. (RR)
(Broken, PO box 460402, San Francisco, CA. 94146-0402)

THE OUTCASTS – "Self Conscious Over You" LP

...looks like a bootleg here...and a GOOD ONE indeed!!!!!!! A whole LP's worth of old Irish punk....or shall I call it pop???? Somewhere in the middle I guess!!! Most of the record is slow grooves...all recorded between '78 through '79 ...!!!! Great mother-fucking stuff here!!!!!! Three of the four fellows in this band are brothers....hmmmm. ...does anybody remember the CHRISTY TWINS in the '70s????? They were two identical twin surfer boy deluxe brothers who fucked each other in the steamy world of gay porn!!!!!! I wonder if the Cowan brothers pulled some of the same hanky-panky back in the day...don't all brothers fool with each other's gear at some point in their lives?????? (SW)
(Bagsnatcher)

THE PAUKI – "The Holiday at the Lunatic Asylum" CD

This is pretty strange—it's sort of comedy-horror-surf-punk, from Russia of all places. At times they remind me of the OFFSPRING a little, but only a little. The songs are pretty fast and all over the place...they're maybe a bit like the COWBOY KILLERS as well, although nowhere near as amazing as the COWBOY KILLERS were in their prime. The guitarist has some cool East Bay Ray effects going on. Pretty interesting considering where it's from, and definitely devoid of any pretension or coolness factor. (AM)
(Tankovich Sasha, St. Petersburg, Metallostroy, 196641, PO Box 86, RUSSIA)

THE PAUKI – "The Flag on the Flagpole" CD

Originally released as a nine-song cassette in 1996, this CD includes five live tunes and a video! The PAUKI play a fast, *Peter Gunn*-style Oi/surf party music with lots of repeated choruses. Lyrically, they rely heavily on ship and pirate metaphors whilst incorporating whistle leads and hyper drum roll beats. The sound quality of the live tunes isn't very good, but the video is certainly confusing and entertaining. Some fine Russian shenanigans. (HM)
(The Pauki: Tankovich Sasha, PO Box 86, St. Petersburg, Metallostroy 196641, RUSSIA, www.pauki.nm.ru)

PF COMMANDO – "Manipulerade Mongon" LP

There's no room for art in PF COMMANDO's world, but there's no shortage of vitriol to hurl at hippies, senior citizens, and the world lurking outside of the rock club. PF COMMANDO were a Swedish band who (it seems) released *Manipulerade Mongon* in 1979 before sailing into the sunset on a flaming funeral barge. It's bottom-scraping rock 'n' roll that brings early Swedish industrial punks the LEATHER NUN to mind...or German sleaze-rockers BIG BALLS & THE GREAT WHITE IDIOT. Lyric-wise they're singin' about "London Sightseeing," "Svenne Pop," and "No More Masturbation"—challenging it ain't, but they're aiming for your guts and not your brains. Their no-budget approach is enhanced by a zero-frills bootleg package (but just think of all the trouble you'd have locating an original). *Manipulerade Mongon* is unique and thrilling stuff; discovering a band like PF COMMANDO in 2004 is better than finding Spanish dubloons in your toilet tank. (JH)
(no address)

POISON IDEA - "Feel the Darkness" LP

The best thing about writing reviews is hearing new bands you otherwise would have missed. The second best thing is having to sit down and listen to records you haven't listened to in years, all the way through, and rediscovering how great they are. POISON IDEA are the musical equivalent of pulling someone down by the hair and kicking them in the face. I hear a lot of bands described as brutal but forget it: POISON IDEA are the first and last word in brutality, and not just on record or on stage, as a state of being, these guys were literally larger than life, with appetites to match. Their songs were fast, hard, powerful, dark, and amazingly well written, there's hooks with the power and melody in the violence—while most hardcore bands are good for one album/EP/song, they kept churning out brilliant records. It's debatable what the best release is, but for me it's *Feel the Darkness*, if only for one reason..."Just to Get Away" is thee nastiest song I've ever heard, when people say "this rocks" or "that rocks" *nothing* rocks like "Just to Get Away," *nothing*...I mean, listen, "Quit my job, told my boss to stand aside. Grabbed a gun, a fifth of booze, jumped in my ride. I got my girl—she's sixteen and she's really special. I can't slow down I've got a date with the devil..." now *that's* poetry. I have already made arrangements with my family and close friends for it to be played at my funeral. Anyway—for about the tenth time, on about the tenth different label *Feel the Darkness* has been re-released. It's already out there on CD, now the vinyl's available again too. Buy it and blast "Alan's On Fire" (or any song for that matter) in your room at full volume and see how long it's takes for your parents to stop thinking that this punk rock phase you're going through is kinda cute. POISON IDEA rule. (AD)
(Farewell)

POP RIVETS – "Greatest Hits" LP

Pre-HEADCOATS/MIGHTY CEASARS/MILKSHAKES goods from wild Billy Childish. Recorded in 1979, it still has the unmistakable Childish raw energy, just more punk, less lo-fi than much of his later outings. While some tracks reek of pure WIRE-esque snot punk energy, there is a real 60s vibe to some of the other tracks (a precursor to Childish's later efforts perhaps). Worth picking up for the storming "Fun in the UK" at very least. (TB)
(Damaged Goods, PO Box 45854, London, E11 1YX, UNITD KINGDOM)

POP RIVETS - "Empty Sounds from Anarchy Ranch" LP

Here's a reissue of an early Billy Childish release originally on his long-gone Hangman label. This live LP has his first punker band blasting away at a Kraut Klub in 1979, all raw angst and mod stupor, and probably going over really keeno with the local Bundeswehr rejects. It features damn good sound considering it's probably recorded in a World War Two-holdover concrete bunker. Some covers (duh) and a bunch of CHILDISH tracks you "ain't gonna hear anywhere else." I believe the last few tracks are primitive studio versions, so...well! If you haven't spent all your folding on a new iPod, perhaps this white vinyl cheese küchen will satisfy. (RW)
(Damaged Goods, PO Box 45854, London, E11 1YX, UNITD KINGDOM, www.damagedgoods.com)

THE POWER & THE GLORY – "Call Me Armageddon" CD

I'm gonna have to use the name CONVERGE in every line of this review, cuz everything here smacks of that seminal metalcore band. Musically, everything sounds like *Jane Doe* Part Deux—it's got the huge blown-out guitar sound, the distorted vocals, the occasional blast beats, the longer melodic songs. Plus, the layout design is from CONVERGE's singer, the recording is by their guitarist, it's on CONVERGE's label and the band even moved to Boston from Atlanta (maybe for the chowder). But despite their all-too-obvious influence, it's not a bad page to borrow from and the THE POWER & THE GLORY have enough interesting riffs and ideas to make this worth checking out. (EL)
(Deathwish, www.deathwishinc.com)

POWERSOLO / REAL MONEYMAKER$ – split EP

POWERSOLO seem to be Danish Tex/Mex-influenced rock and rollers (just what you'd expect from their name, right). They even seem to be attempting to sing in Spanish on "Juanito." Absolutely brilliant in its ridiculousness. As though that wasn't enough, the REAL MONEYMAKER$ toss in an organ-heavy instro that's redolent of the MUMMIES and a dementedly-noisy garageish song about how Ibiza sucks or something. Pick to hit! (DD)
(Mastermind, Silkebergvej 226, 2 TV, 8230 Aabyhej, DENMARK, mastermindrecords@ofir.dk)

RAG MEN – "My World" LP

I am going to try my best to describe this appropriately, which is going to be tough since I don't really listen to any bands like this. First off, RAG MEN is just *way* too slow for my tastes. The overall talent is definitely there, but I can't help but think that this would sound ten times better if this band played everything twice as fast. At their best they remind a little of TERROR, and at their worst they remind of

a band that you would see at the Ozzfest. Most of the time it's just repetitive mid-paced plodding with that classic "nu-metal" bass tone that I cannot stand. I might as well mention that this band contains members of MERAUDER and SKARHEAD, since mentioning this is probably more helpful to the fans of this genre than the rest of this review. (CC)
(Malfunction, P.O. Box. 220761, Chantilly, VA. 20153-0761)

RAMPAGE – "Heads in a Vice" EP
Whoa! This is incredibly generic sXe youth crew that sounds like it should of came out in 1989 (but it is actually a current release). They have lyrics about being positive and lifting weights, like "a few reps and my self respect grows and plus I look pretty good without any clothes." One can only hope it is a joke. Something tells me it is not. Nevertheless, the hordes of sweaty boys in Champion hoodies will eat this shit up. XXX! (RC)
(Lockin' Out)

RAPPRESAGLIA – "1982" CD
Killer thrashing fuzzed out Italian hardcore from these vets (around since '82—ex-IMPACT), whom I've honestly never listen to before. Why didn't I get the memo about how fucking great they are? I have a fax-machine, so where's my fucking memo?! Reminds me a bit of DECLINO, though with a fuller, better, thicker recording. This is a CD re-ish of their 1998 album of tracks recorded in 1983, plus some tracks from the *Skins E Punks=TNT* compilation. Tense blasts of frantic hardcore that is just totally relentless! Great! (MT)
(City of the Dead, CP 88 (Viterbo Centro), 01100 Viterbo, ITALY, www.cityofthedead.net)

RAT BASTARDS – "RDA" EP
Tearing. Killing. Smashing. Chaotic death. Angrily political Crazy guitar solos! MINUTEMEN meets GANG GREEN meets a petrol bomb in a fucking cops face-fuck. Good and fast with breaks. Killer. (JA)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS)

THE REAL LOSERS – "Don't Leave Me Now" EP
What a glorious racket, a perfect complement to a beer- and drug- induced hangover, just the remedy for my booze blues and post party paranoia. Low-fi but not a platter full of unlistenable static, a certain early Rip-Off record quality blended with some nifty 60s-inspired garage punk. I've missed this sound; I've missed it most when it was played well which the REAL LOSERS have managed to do. Finally, UK garage that competes with the heavyweights. Simply put, this rocks and if you find yourself missing TEENGENERATE and the MUMMIES, go do yourself a favor. (SD)
(Bancroft, 816 Bancroft, Port Huron, MI 48060)

REDLINERS – "Just Tonight/Fakes"
"Just Tonight" is ringing pop with a slightly 1960s influence: jaunty sounds that suggest rolling fields of daffodils, surfer chicks with steam-pressed blonde tresses, and late-night Grape Nehi binges. Good song. "Fakes" is a down-and-dirty rock groove; it reminds me of the better Sup Pop singles of 12 or 13 years distant. The REDLINERS are, I hear, a two-piece band (duet?) that have to share all the work between 'em. Still sounds better and louder than a lot of bands with twice or thrice as many members. (JH)
($4 ppd: Dee Minus, PO Box 1954, Paducah, KY 42002)

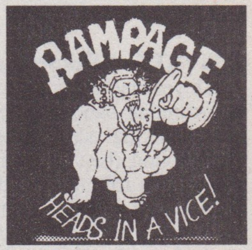
REGRESS – "Look Who's Pulling the Strings" EP
Some former personnel from LIFE SENTENCE offer eight tracks of tense punk that lives up to its lineage. This is brash political punk, with songs that have no fat and lyrics that really hit the mark; the agro of "Nuclear Bomb" is simple and almost perfect—but the quality level is strong on all eight tracks. Comes on cool white vinyl. Strongly recommended. (SS)
(Lengua Armada, 1010-1/2 Riverine Ave., Santa Ana, CA 92700)

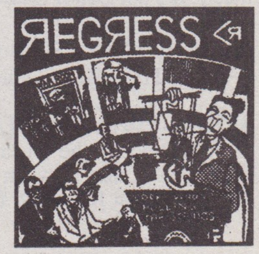
THE REVELONS – "Anthology" CD
This is an amazing collection of this obscure late 70s/early 80s New York punk band. Singer/guitarist Gregory Lee Pickard sounds like the missing link between Tom Verlaine and Richard Hell. A fantastic first-era punk band. The CD includes their *Ork* 7" and their tracks from the *2x5* compilation plus more. The songs are extremely catchy, poppy punk. Chances are you have never heard of the REVELONS so do yourself a favor and pick this up. (CK)
(Sepiatone, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

RHINO 39 – "Xerox" EP
Yet another Dangerhouse classic bootlegged from the master plates. This is exactly what a bootleg/reissue should be—faithful to the original, released purely so people can actually get there hands on great records avoiding collector scum prices. One of the later Dangerhouse releases and a real fave of mine, this is not as legendary as the DILS, AVENGERS or DEADBEATS but still a cracking disc. Heading away from the classic late 70s punk sound this label is famous for into a faster, rawer almost hardcore sound. three songs; no bullshit, no filler…classic. (TB)
(no address)

RIGHTEOUS JAMS – "Rage of Discipline" LP
Heavily produced straight edge hawdcore. Not bad...I guess… Think LIGHTS OUT but not as good. If you were at Posi-numbers you would probably dig it. These guys seem really defensive about how much fun they are having not drinking or doing drugs, which makes me kind of think they may be lying, but that's just speculation. How righteous can your jams be without hitting the beer bong once or twice in your life? BUST IT! BREAK IT DOWN! (NT)
(Lockin' Out, 91 Gordon St. #20, Brighton, MA 02135)

RIISTETYT – "Skitsofrenia" 12"
Do you know how much I love this record? I mean really, truly love this record? You know, everyone should love this record. Seriously, people talk BLACK FLAG this, SSD that—but some days I question if those bands even come close holding a candle to this monster of a record. I mean sure, *Damaged* is amazing, and *Get it Away* is a beast of a platter—but some days this just seems to kick it up a few notches for me. The jury is still out, so I'm withholding final judgment, but what I do know for certain is that this is one totally classic twelve-inch hunk of vinyl. Fierce, furious, frantic blasts Finnish hardcore—a truly amazing record that should *at least* be viewed with the same praise and adulation as the American classics we all know and love so much. Thankfully this brilliant work, which has for too long dwelt in the realm of collector scum obscurity, is now available to you, the masses, thanks to German label known as Hohnie. Go get it! (MT)
(Hohnie, c/o Andreas Höhn, An Der Kuhtränke 7, 31535 Neustadt, GERMANY, www.hoehnierecords.de)





RIPCORDZ – "Are Go!" CD
Re-release from '88 of this old Canuck band. Pretty uninspiring mid-tempo punk rock which just plods along. They even manage to butcher the classic "Gary Gilmore's Eyes" by the ADVERTS. Sorry lads, this is terrible. (TB)
(Mayday)

THE RITES – "Wish You Never Knew" 12"
If you were a fan of their first full length, then this is more of the same—eight songs of fast rocking hardcore in the vein of TEAR IT UP and CUT THE SHIT. Best song on here: "Pissing on Your Grave." Most boring song on here: "No More Sorrys." Tracks that repeat the same line over and over again, and take up half of a side of a record don't usually work. This one is way too long, and way too self-indulgent. Other than that, this is good. (CC)
(Even Worse, Noel De Boer, Saenredamstr, 44-2, 1072 Chamsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS)

ROSVETT - "Thitma Karin" CD
Ah yes, another rock-solid release from this long-running band from Sweden. (They have been cranking out releases since 1985) This time around they break no new ground, but keep things rolling with their trademark crust filled assault. If you have never heard them, all you need to do is reference other classic punk bands from Sweden like AVSKUM and you will figure it out pretty quickly. (RC)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave., Cotati, CA 94931, www.sixweeksrecords.com)

RUDIMENTARY PENI – "Archaic" 10"
Maybe not the perfect thing to listen to while I'm on my allergy medicine, this sounds good nonetheless. Every time something new from RUDIMENTARY PENI comes out I can't help but think that it will be interesting—but that it won't compare to their earlier releases, and it is always the case. Nick Blinko is the insane prince of punk rock who renounced his throne and instead locked himself away in the highest tower in the land where he passed the days scrawling on the walls, before reemerging in the early 90s. RUDIMENTARY PENI were, probably, the greatest talent to come out of the British anarcho-punk movement of the late 70s/early 80s. They never sloganeered or played it by the numbers, instead they wrote twisted little masterpieces that would influence everything from goth to grindcore for decades to come. Blinko's lyrics, like his artwork may be a little much for some, but no one will ever accuse him of being boring, mundane, or played-out. This new offering continues where *The Underclass* and *Pope Adrian...* left off, it's more scary, sinister, downright weird, and totally brilliant dark punk rock music. It's not *Death Church*, but then nothing will be ever again. (AD)
(Outer Himalayan, PO Box 59, London N22 1AR, UNITED KINGDOM)

SEIGE – "Drop Dead" LP
A reissue of the Boston hardcore classic from 1984. This is when hardcore began to embrace metal too much for my tastes. I like the speed and the gravelly vocals. It is the guitar solos that I hate. The lyrics were definitely my style in the 80s. I really felt like bands were saying something. How could I not with songs like "Conform," "Life of Hate," "Starvation," "Sad But True," etc. Side two of this record is one long, slow jam called "Grim Ripper." What were they thinking (or taking)? (CK)
(Six Weeks, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510)

SHOCK TROOP – "Suck My Blood" EP
Strange! SHOCK TROOP is an Austrian band whose classic punk style sounds like it came straight from the shores of Japan. Hard charging punk that pulls influence from bands like LIP CREAM. Growling vocals hold their ground over the catchy riffs and rumbling bass. This is a damn fine release! (RC)
(Whisper In Darkness, PO Box 40113, Portland, OR 97240-0113)

SICK TERROR – "Vida Mediocre" EP
Freaking brutal hardcore fury from Brazil that stands head and shoulders above the hardcore pack. Insane rage-filled vocals, crushing intensity and roaring guitars, power power, power!! This is hardcore at its best. They cover both HERESY and RIISTETYT to maximum effect. In the immortal words of Mike Thorn: "SICK TERROR are awesome!" Highly Recommended! (WM)
(Undislessed, BP 515, 33001 Bordeaux, FRANCE, www.undislessed.ifrance.com)

SIGNAL LOST – "Children of the Wasteland" LP
Eerie femme-fronted peace punk from Texas. The singer actually *sings,* and it really works. Vocally it reminds me of the old Norwegian band LIFE...BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? or even POST REGIMENT from Poland. Although the rhythm section is a little one-dimensional, it is carried by the fantastic guitar work and belting vocals. Not as dirgey as the old UK band the MOB, but it definitely has the same peace punk vibe and I'm loving it. (TB)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892)

THE SINGULARITY – self titled CD
OK, OK, you sound just like JAWBREAKER *Unfun*-era. So what, you kinda is like LEATHERFACE who were like JAWBREAKER (and vice versa) anyway. Throw in some wanna-be MINOR THREAT choruses which only come out as ENEMIES-sounding and we got a crap, weak record. What are the odds on this band sucking corporate ass in the next three years? I just frisbeed this CD across the courtyard at Anandi's head! (JA)
(The Singularity, PO Box 5060, Alameda, CA. 94501)

SK8 OR DIE - "Not in My Skatepark" CD
All right! Two skate punk records in one issue Wahoo! SK8 OR DIE play some pretty average metal-edged punk, it seriously sounds like they just picked up their instruments four months ago—truly DIY feeling. But that's not very important, what's important is that every song on this CD is about skateboarding and has song titles like: "Skate Youth," "Concrete Grinds Steel," and my personal fav "Roadkill Rollerblader." I'd love to be skating a backyard ramp with these guys rocking out on the platform. That would be pure bliss. (AS)
(Hill Billy Stew, PO BOX 82625, San Diego, CA, 92138, www.hillbillystew.com)

SKATE KORPSE – "No Fun" EP
Jesus, if someone told me this was recorded in 1983 I'd believe 'em. SKATE KORPSE skate and create rock that sounds like the original skate rock—BIG BOYS, FACTION, JFA (all in one) and they even have a lounge-style intro to the first song that sounds like JOHNNY RAD. I love it! Bomb the hills, yeah!!! Skate punk is great punk. (AS)
(Punks Before Profits, 209 Center Street, Olean, NY. 14760; punksbeforeprofits@hotmail.com)

SLUGFUCKERS – "Cacophany 1979-'81" CD
If anyone was curious if the *collecto escumico* froth over this Aussie band's first two late-70s 7"s was justified, well, it was. This double CD set features both of them in their entirety, and they are the best damn art punk you will hear for the next few months of your halting existence. If you dig the SCREAMERS and FALL with a touch of early THROBBING GRISTLE, you will punt on third down to hear these. Also included is their full length LP from 1981 and an entire disc of live sonic malevolence which is like the 7"s effect stretched out for 22 tracks. The "anti" feeling throughout these two discs is so strong that you get a perverse and totally uplifting "life is fucking great!" dose of dumb-grin energy. Well, some people do. Not exactly "date" music, if you follow the Lester Bangs dictum, but a great thing to listen to ten minutes before you leave for work. You know, so you remember why...(RW)
(Harbinger Sound, PO Box 7133, Nottingham NG5 7WE, UNITED KINGDOM)

SOOPHIE NUN SQUAD – "Pasizzle Slizzles Tha Drizzle" CD
SNS is this bizarre, whacked-out nine-member band or theatre troupe, and this is like one of their soundtracks. They tackle electronica, musicals, a little hip-hop, and a little punk. They seem to have boosted the production and are spending more time singing and letting the singing carry tunes. They're pushing their own boundaries with "The Scab Fairy" musical number broken down into seven parts! This is a crazy ride on a weird journey, and I like it. (HM)
(Plan It X, PO Box 3521, Bloomington, In 47402, www.plan-it-x.com)

SOULCRAFT – "Absolute Suspicion" LP
It is good to see this release come out on good ol' vinyl (the CD originally came out on Bloodsucker from Japan). SOULCRAFT, who are from Japan, blaze their way through 12 songs of steamrolling punk that pulls together many of the elements that makes traditional

Japanese punk so memorable. Snarling vocals, galloping drums, fist pumping guitar riffs…you know the story. Awesome! (RC)
(Putrid Filth Conspiracy, Box 7092, 200 42 Malmo, SWEDEN, www.fly.to/putridfilth)

STAB YOU IN THE HEAD – "And Eat Your Face Off" CD
This starts off with some thick '93 style mosh, and I got worried and started reaching for the eject button to send this shiny metal disc to hell. Then it tears full-on into some total LEFT FOR DEAD/SWARM-style brutalicore. Thick, metallic, moshy, but still moving at a quick pace. God, please don't let the mosh metal come back into style! Please! I'll never listen to this again, and hopefully will be able to forget the whole thing ever happened. I mean they thank weightlifting in general. Uh yeah… (MT)
(Red Scroll, 5 Arbor Ln., Wallingford, CT 06492)

STAGE BOTTLES – "We Need a New Flag" CD
Arguably the best skinhead band in Europe, the BOTTLES have released yet another sing-along classic. Poppier than their last, but still music to wave large mugs of strong German beer along to. The STAGE BOTTLES prove that you can have a huge skinhead following and be outspoken leftist anti-fascists. Great release from a great band. (TB)
(Knock Out, PO Box 100716, 46527 Dinslaken, GERMANY)

STIFF LITTLE FINGERS – "Guitar and Drum" CD
This came out in Europe last summer, but here is the US release. I loved the early band's first four studio LPs, so everything else is reunion stuff to me, although having Bruce Foxton of JAM fame in SLF is pretty cool. This is probably the strongest and most solid of the reunion studio stuff. Not the rage of the first two LPs, but a good batch of songs from a legendary band. (RL)
(Kung Fu)

STOCKYARD STOICS – "Resistance" CD
This was recorded in the years 2000 and 2001, so it's not the new full- length as I had initially thought from these street punk boys. Outta New York, this has raspy vocals and social/political lyrics. Similar in sound to the early DROPKICK MURPHYS, this is the second strong full-length I've heard from these guys. (RL)
(MSM 1279, PO Box 91, 90576 Langenenn, GERMANY, www.stockyardstoics.com)

STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER – "Fuck the Kids" EP
Holy Christ this is some crazy noisy fucked-up shit. A total assault on all that is good and pure in the world; this is music for the glue-sniffing cat-torturers of the world, as I know the Fresno-confined kids in STRAIGHT EDGE KEGGER to be. Half the tracks are recorded live, but it's hard to tell- all the tracks are lo-fi bursts of feedback-ridden grind/hardcore. Meg's (ex-HATE MAIL KILLERZ) voice is absolutely insane on this, you've never heard anyone sound so monstrously pissed- the song "I Had a Bad Day" pretty well sums things up. Buy this for your grandma. (EL)
(Undislessed, BP 515, 33001 Bordeaux Cedex, FRANCE, www.undislessed.ifrance.com)

STREET TRASH – EP
Granted I am a huge fan of STREET TRASH, but does the world really need another release of the same seven songs? These are the same songs from the CD and 12" that have come out in the last year or so. Well, if you don't have it, then you better get it. They fucking smoke through these tunes. Snotty-ass, hook filled thrash that jumps off the turntable and hits you like a kick to the spine. Killer! One of my favorite bands of the last year. (RC)
(Kangaroo, Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, THE NETHERLANDS, Tyson@xs4all.nl)

STRAY BULLETS – "The Slings and Arrows of Outrageous Fortune" CD
Here's some good Boston ska-punk using basic ska guitar chords and no brass—some tracks veering into anthemic punk territory. This album is well produced, with catchy vocals and lyrics about labor, politics, and drinking. I'm definitely not a big fan of ska-punk but all things considered, I must say these guys actually play this genre really fucking well. (SR)
(Fork in Hand, PO Box 230023, Boston, MA 02123, www.forkinhand.com)

SUNDAY MORNING EINSTIENS – "Sunday Morning Tour" EP
Another output by this solid-as-hell Swedish powerhouse, this time in the form of a limited tour only 7" for their US tour. It sounds, well, like all the bands from Sweden that record collectors shit themselves over rolled into one brutal unit. As with most tour 7"s, it isn't quite as good as the regular releases—but then again, if you are into Swedish-style hardcore you will probably buy and enjoy any S.M.E. release. (NT)
(Prank, PO Box 410892, San Francisco, CA 94141-0892)

SWINGIN' UTTERS - "Live in a Dive" LP
The latest in the series of live releases is a double SWINGIN' UTTERS album, recorded at the Troubadour in LA last year. As usual the sound quality is very good, though I've never been a fan of live albums. I loved the first UTTERS album, but felt that the quality started to drop off a bit after that. There's a good selection of old and new songs and the whole thing is nicely packaged and comes complete with a comic book. (AD)
(Fat, PO Box 193690, San Francisco, CA 94119)

SYZSLAK – "Destroy the Light" EP
Hmm, a promising but spotty debut from these Philadelphia dirge-meisters. I love the sound they're going for—mining sludge/grind terrain like maybe CATTLEPRESS meets DYSTOPIA with bits of DESPISE YOU and PLUTOCRACY thrown in. They mix up several riffs and tempo changes per song and that's a good thing, but sometimes it works and sometimes they've got the suck turned up way too high. Basically side A is pretty solid with nice transitions between mid-pace grooves and grind and back again, while side B (from an earlier recording session) is where it doesn't work so well and some of the riffs are just bad. In any event, the good stuff is really good, so I'll be keeping an eye out for 'em in the future. (EL)
(World Eater, PO Box 42728, Philadelphia, PA 19101, www.worldeaterrecords.com)

TEN VOLT SHOCK – LP
Fourteen tracks of distorto-bass noisy post-punk. There's an ex-member of KURT on guitar and vocals but this is a lot more arty and less anguished. Layers of scratchy guitar and mantra-like, Albini-esque vocals rest uneasily on top of the propulsive, repetitive drums and

rumbling bass. They've got a good sound going, but to be honest, over the course of the whole LP, it gets a little repetitive. I bet they're great live. (AM)
(X-Mist, Leonhardstr. 18A, 72202 Nagold, GERMANY, www.x-mist.de)

TEXAS TERRI BOMB! – "Your Lips…My Ass" LP
Somebody decided they were really going to take an angle and go with on this one. There she is, Texas Terri, on the cover, full of bad make-up and tattoos showing the cleavage that she's got. There she is again, this time on the back cover, again not wearing much. Then again on the inside sleeve, this time all wrapped up with a big-ass fucking snake. Well she's tough, that much we know. I'm struggling with the music. I actually like it, but I'm reluctant. Would I like it less or more if I hadn't seen all the packaging? It's catchy and it's punk rock and it's got some decent female, growling vocals. It's even PRETENDERS new wave at times. And she's managed to convince some pretty well-known punk rock superstars to back her up. The word on the street is that she puts on a damn good live show and is the "female IGGY POP". (KK)
(TKO, 3126 W. Cary St. #303, Richmond, VA, 23221, www.tkorecords.com)

THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB – "Dance Party with..."10"
TBIAPB has this countrified CAMPER VAN BEETHOVEN/Neil Yong feel, and after a few shows and a few, I'm finally figuring them out (or am I mellowing out?). Their mid-tempo low-fi, folksy, acoustic sound works, and this record has 12 fine little ditties. Check 'em out. (HM)
(Troy, Box 1168, Elkford, BC V0B 1H0, CANADA, tmalish@hotmail.com, tbiapb@hotmail.com)

THREATS – "Twelve Punk Moves" LP
I'm a big fan of this bands early 7"s…but they came out over 20 years ago!! By the law of averages this was going to suck…couldn't have been more wrong. Sounding more like the bands from today who are trying to sound like old UK82 bands (VIRUS, UNSEEN, CLIT 45 etc) this sounds totally fresh and energetic. Great from start to finish it blows away shite like the CASUALTIES that all the dipshit wanna-be punk kids are all over. (TB)
(Intimindation)

THREE MINUTE MOVIE / THE MILES APART – split EP
The THREE MINUTE MOVIE songs are strong catchy pop punk. Think SUPERCHUNK and HUSKER DU. Very good stuff. The MILES APART side is very tuneful pop punk *a la* STICKS AND STONES and PORCELAIN BOYS. A strong pop EP from the reliable Snuffy Smile. (RL)
(Snuffy Smile)

THE TOTAL END – "Chasing Nightmares" LP
Fucking brutal hardcore with rage-filled male vocals from the dungeons, and excellent intense breakdowns and build-ups. Their superior lyrics about ignoring society's problems, working too much, cherishing friends, living in fear and White House politics lend to the overall dark and dirty feel to the album. "Let the maggots feed on the remains of humanity." Wha-haa-ha…(SR)
(No Options, PO Box 22285, Oakland, CA 94623, nooptions666@yahoo.com)

TOTSUGEKI SENSYA– "Change the Future" EP
Driving crusty punk rock from Japan that has all the hooks to make it an interesting listen. "Pucka Pucka" drums, lyrics written in "standard DISCHARGE" form and the occasional guitar solos that make me want to throw my fist in the air. What more do you need? Oh yeah, the bonus of a rad silk screened cover. Hot damn. (NT)
(Lengua Armada, searchforthesun@alpha.ocn.ne.jp)

TRADITIONALS – "Dead Society" CD
Sonically this is tremendous up-tempo skinhead music. I don't have time for the plodding Oi crap, so this is a welcome relief sounding way more punk than Oi. For the most part the lyrics follow the usual skinhead topics of fighting, boozing and being working class, which is fine by me. Then they do the song "The Day the Eagle Bled" about terrorism and "our flag" and it all goes downhill. I just can't get into lyrics like "Invade us, now we invade them / 911 the eagle bled now its time to defend." I still can't believe that people involved in punk music don't even have a basic understanding of US foreign policy and military history, if they did then songs like this just wouldn't exist…you know what? Fuck your "flag of freedom" and your nationalistic bullshit. (TB)
(Impact)

TRAILER PARK TORNADOS – "Don't Mind the Maggots" EP
Four tracks of catchy, snotty, fuzzed out rockers. This is some great stuff. Dirty, ugly, bad attitude rock and roll. Cheap-ass dirt shit siren guitar jumpin' in and out and all around. Awesome. "Ghetto Outsider" sounds like some lost killed by death classic. "Dial 'L' For Loser" rips as well. Nice shitty trashy production and whiskey drunk vocals. Me likes, quite a bit. Big Neck Records is back. (RR)
(Big Neck, PO Box 8144, Reston, VA 20195)

TREMORS – "The Scourge of the South" CD
Another in the long line of psycho-rockabilly bands around. Now I'm really picky about rockabilly—I don't like very much of it. This band has the horror theme in its name and cover art, but it's pretty straight-up old school rockabilly with no frills. Not too bad, but not keeping my attention either. (DP)
(Brain Drain, PO Box 77782, Greensboro, NC 27417, www.tremorsrockabilly.com)

TRIAC / THE KARMA PAYMENT PLAN – split EP
TRIAC plays some straight-up metallic grind that effortlessly flows between fast to mid-tempos. The KARMA PAYMENT PLAN, plays a mix of technical metal, crust and grind. An interesting combination that actually works. This EP is worth checking out for sure. (RC)
(Chaotic Noise)

TRIO – "Don't Forget" EP
What we have here is two songs by this Japanese three piece that would seem to draw on a heavy NEW BOMB TURKS or RIVERBOAT GAMBLERS feel, but without the kick of either of those two bands. Neither song on this 7" really ever gets going, and they can't even knock out that annoying new wave band of the same name for my favorite TRIO. Oh well, at least I don't have to try and write away for another Japanese punk record. If you want to here is the address…(JF)
(Target Earth, 505 Lupinas Hiranuma, 1-1-15 Hiranuma, Nishi-ku, Yokahama, 220-0023, JAPAN)

UNDER ONE FLAG / ANOTHER WAY – split CD
UNDER ONE FLAG are total tough-guy hardcore, could have been on Victory records five years go, music to lift weights and flex muscles to. ANOTHER WAY are more traditional old school sXe sounding, just without the spark that bands like DESPERATE MEASURES, LIGHTS OUT or the FIRST STEP have. (TB)
(NGS, PO Box 334, Westmont, IL, 60559)

UNSACRED HEARTS – CD
At first listen, Mr. Cynical was on my left shoulder whispering nasty things about "slick" and "unfocused." Then Mr. Heythat'snotbad chimed in from the right, pointing out how good the tracks in the middle of this solid indie-punk CD are, especially "Heart of the City" and "1978." In the end, there are some good indie-punk tracks sandwiched around some dead weight, which makes me think these guys could rip off a solid winner in the future. (RW)
(Serious Business, 538 Johnson Ave, Suite 205, Brooklyn, NY, 11237)

VANING 5 – "Slå Tillbaks Och Överlev" EP
It's funny that I referenced QUARANTINE earlier, because this sounds a lot like their friends and mine, DISAFFECT. Dual male/female vocal political crust punk from Germany. You know you love it. (AM)
(c/o Brickwall Distribution, 704 NE Dekum St., Portland, PR 97211, brickwall@earthlink.net)

VERSE – "Four Songs" EP

Melodic youth crew hardcore with breakdowns and sing-alongs. The only real reference I have to this kind of stuff is GORILLA BISCUITS, or maybe MAJORITY OF ONE. See, I'm just showing my ignorance. This isn't as melodic as GORILLA BISCUITS, but it's pretty diverse structurally. "Nothing More" starts off with a power ballad intro that is pretty scary, not in a cool evil black metal way but in the way that you're worried the song might continue like that. Luckily it doesn't. Fairly distinctive for this kind of stuff I have to say. (AM)
(Contrast, PO Box 2492, Providence, RI 02906, www.contrastrecordstore.com)

VICTIMIZE – "Where Did the Money Go?" EP

...cuts by old late 70s punkers...not the best stuff from the period, but it still has style!!!!! Nice package...comes with a nifty booklet with info and fotos...and a cover of John Cooper Clarke's "Innocence" tops it off!!!! Limited to 500!!!! PS Don't let your father eat your sister's vagina by himself...the family that lays together stays together!!!!! (SW)
(Last Year's Youth)

VILETONES – "Screaming Fist" EP

Well, this is the eleventy-twelfth reissue of the first VILETONES 7"; at least this version doesn't leave a song off like the Man's Ruin version from the late 90s did. Short and sweet: one of the ten best punk records to ever come out of Canada: a 1977 bedrock record. (RW)
(Booty Boot)

VOETSEK – "The Castrator Album" LP

Blazing fast female-fronted thrash-attack from these Bay Area maniacs—they won last years *UGZ* magazine Speed Trials for a good reason. They've got some of the best and funniest lyrics I've read in a long time, kicking Nazi ass, jock ass, pay-to-play venues ass, bands whose names you can't read ass, Jesus Christ's ass, tampons not being free ass, etc. They get my vote for best song title, as well "Judas Beast (How Come Nobody Knew That Rob Halford Was Gay?)." Rockin'. And I really dig their take on BLACK FLAG's *Everything Went Black* cover art, nice. Bringing back the chaos to 'core! Awesome. (WM)
(Six Weeks, 225 Lincoln Ave, Cotati, CA 94931)

WAR OF DESTRUCTION – "A Touch of Scandinavia" LP

WAR OF DESTRUCTION hailed from Denmark, circa 1983–'90 and played catchy as hell, three-chord hardcore punk that really stands up years later and makes you want to pogo around the room and while cutting the sleeves off your offensive homemade t-shirt...it's that good. This LP compiles their 7" and a collection of live tracks that range from awesome to downright unlistenable. Top-notch punk rock that blows away 90% of the crap going on right now. (NT)
(mastermindrecords@ofir.dk)

WHO'S MY SAVIOUR / IDIOT SAVANT – split LP

WHO'S MY SAVIOUR kick out speedy grind very reminiscent of GRIDE, with half the songs sung in German, half in English. Everything from the vocals to the blasts reminds me of GRIDE, but WHO'S MY SAVIOUR are no mere copycats—the best page they borrow from their Czech contemporaries is the use of odd minor-key melodies woven into parts of the songs, right before (and sometimes while) they go full-on ballistic. End result is unique and memorable songs, and one killer half of a record. I only wish the production was a bit better cuz these guys could be seriously heavy. I think they also have a guitarist from ENTRAILS MASSACRE, but don't quote me on that. IDIOT SAVANT however, is pretty painful listening. Sounding like a lot of Per Koro bands like MORSER and FORCED TO DECAY, except with crappier riffs and some positively fucking horrendous singing—you really don't need to hear this. Don't let them stop you from checking out WHO'S MY SAVIOUR though. (EL)
(W.I.F.A.G.E.N.A., wifagena@freenet.de)

WHITE FLAG – "Eternally Undone" CD

20 Years of Real Punk, they claim. It has to be longer than that, doesn't it? WHITE FLAG charged outta the chute in the early 1980s combining sarcastic punk-rock parody with "killer thrash" on record albums like *Third Strike* and *S is for Space.* Fixtures of LA mags like *FlipSide* and *Ink Disease,* they also boasted the only moustache in the entire Los Angeles punk rock community (sprouting from the mug of guitarist Pat Fear). As the decade progressed the band explored quasi-psychedelic power-pop and 70s stadium-style rock, issuing, touring, and growing progressively stranger around the edges. I wasn't paying attention after 1986, but I knew they were out there...somewhere, somehow. *Eternally Undone* is their latest outing—it stills boasts the loud punk guitars, but straddles the gap between CHEAP TRICK-style Camaro boogie and the kinda slicked-back modern punk you hear on the radio (but can never identify). Some peripheral synth and guitar weirdness suggests spaced-out HAWKWIND druggery—but at its core *Eternally Undone* is pretty standard 20th anniversary stuff. Doesn't sound like the WHITE FLAG I remember from my freshman year of high school, but at least the moustache remains. (JH)
(Valium/Hellnation, via Nomentana 113, 00161 Rome, ITALY, www.hellnation.it)

ANDRE WILLIAMS/GREASY CHICKENS -split 45

Long-slouching 1950s rhythm-and-soul rocker/horndog Andre Williams and Norton house band the A-BONES join forces: the result is a midnite-blue number called "The Spider and the Fly." If you're an admirer of Sir Andre, you'll like it. Strange hearing a senior citizen croon about a young gal he wants to bust moves on—but if any septuagenarian can pull it off, it's gonna be him. The GREASY CHICKENS' "Andre's Blues" is an upbeat tribute to the Man, played with oily aplomb from a group young enough to play house with his grandkids. It's all right. Nothing special, mind, but fills up the blank vinyl on side two just like it's supposed to. (JH)
(Norton, PO Box 646 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276)

YAPHET KOTTO – "We Bury Our Dead Alive" LP

YAPHET KOTTO is a great modern-day hardcore band. I dig all of their stuff. This record seems to slow it down a little (from the last release)—getting a little heavier in some parts and little more introspective in others, but nonetheless another solid release from these folks. Fans of BREAD & CIRCUITS or TORCHES TO ROME jump on this. (AS)
(Ebullition, PO BOX 680, Goleta, CA. 93116, www.ebullition.com)

THE YARDBIRDS –"Early Yardbirds" LP

Always a band of two half's, the blues driven early

incarnation to the post '66 psychedelic experimentation of a drug-soaked late 60s. This LP covers as many would believe the classic YARDBIRDS line-up, most associated with one Eric Clapton. Definitely paying homage to their black American heroes such as Howlin' Wolf and Willie Dixon, while in typical London Mod style cranking the level up a notch er two. Check out the classics "Evil Hearted You," "Heart Full of Soul," and "Still Sad" to hear the sound the YARDBIRDS would further expand and explore on more with the groundbreaking *Roger the Engineer* and *Little Games* albums. For fans of early PRETTY THINGS, ROLLING STONES and the ANIMALS. (SD)
(Charly)

THE YELLOW PRESS – "Dead Man's Shoes / Bad Blood"
It's cool to see songs I've seen the band play live a bunch finally hit vinyl, but to be honest it's a bit disappointing too. Compared to their energetic and slightly unhinged live show, this is a little…tame? The YELLOW PRESS play post-punk that can best be described as like early FUGAZI with better singing and new-wave video game keyboard sounds. Live you can kind of tune the keyboards out a little, but on record, yup, there they are, right up in the mix. Don't get me wrong though, I like the record. I believe there's a 12" around too with two of their early CDEPs on it. Those kicked ass. (AM)
(Christopher's, www.christophersrecords.com)

THE YELLOW PRESS – LP
I saw the YELLOW PRESS right before they left for their European tour and was pretty blown away. They were raw, energetic, and their performance was rife with fun, hilarious moments. Bluntly speaking, this was primarily the work of vocalist/bassist Steven Chamberlain who really makes this band – and this isn't just because he was in TORCHES TO ROME. His brash, angry vocal style and stage presence are simply amazing, and every time the music reaches its ferocious peak I am reminded of him shouting "I'm not afraid to say I care" on that seminal TORCHES TO ROME 12". At some point though, I always have to yell at myself "Pull your mind out of the past!" All right, I give in. Musically speaking, the YELLOW PRESS are most certainly in that certain post-punk realm where the object is to get the audience to shake their asses and clap their hands above all else. A heavy FUGAZI influence (I remember thinking to myself how badly one of the guitar players wanted to *be* Guy Picciotto), lots of keyboards, and a general "sassyness" about the band put the YELLOW PRESS much closer to an en-vogue band like LIARS than, say, SWIZ. But this isn't entirely a bad thing. The YELLOW PRESS put a measure of originality and urgency into the mix that is rarely found in this presently oversaturated genre. This specific12" has a few really, really good songs, and overall…it rocks, though still not nearly as explosively as their live performance. Ether way, a good record whichever way you want to cut it. Buy it. (SP)
(X-Mist, PO Box 1545, 72195 Nagold, GERMANY, www.x-mist.de)

V/A – "1382 The Persian New Waves: Underground Out of the Islamic Republic Of Iran" LP
Yes, you read that right. This is a compilation of new wave and punk bands from Iran. You know, Iran, right next to that country Iraq, that we just liberated…I know, it seems crazy that there would be punk bands in Iran. While a lot of this is definitely more new wave and bizarre pop with localized folk influences than straight punk, it remains a really cool document and reminder of the role music takes in personal liberation, expression, and the connection that it enables us to have across international boundaries. Includes liner notes and contact information for the bands. (MT)
(Tian An Men 89, www.geocities.com/tam89rds)

V/A – "Bishkek Is Burning" EP
This limited edition collects material from five bands from Kyrgyzstan (!); there are even English translations. The styles and quality vary, from an ART ATTACKS-ish "You're Cool" (arty pop) to the straight-ahead punk of SHUGAR, which has snot-nosed John Lydon-tinged vocals. Altogether, perhaps a bit tame...but this is Kyrgyzstan, after all. (SS)
(www.geocities.com/tan89rds/)

V/A – "The Boss Tuneage Instant Singles Collection, Vol. 2" CD
A collection of six worldwide bands; ROPE, BABY LITTLE TABLETS, INNERFACE, SKEETER, BEAUTY SCHOOL DROPOUT, and IN HARMS WAY. These folks play modish pop, pop punk, pure pop, UK pop, and punk in no particular order. If you can find this, grab it. Amongst the 23 tracks are some real keepers. Multiple tracks by each up and coming band. A no-brainer for fans of the pop. (RL)
(Boss Tuneage, www.bosstuneage.com)

V/A – "Destroy, Vol. 2" LP
Yow! Raging punk rock administered to yer cerebellum here! This compilation starts off all brutal with the WALSH ST. COP KILLERS from Australia dropping a barrage of heavy punk metal riffs on your head! The song "Junkie Mum" has a dangerous guitar riff propelling a rowdy bass and drum madness with great vocals. Next up you get COACCION from Mexico with a terrifying cacophony of punk sounds! These punkers assault the senses and leave you drained on their song "Solo Imagen." Band number three on side one is DELTA, from Japan, with their metallic riffage on the thrash song "War Machine." Fucking mind blowing! Side two has a throwaway bong by SCUMPUTER from the UK called "Dis Iz Fake", which consists of drum playing plus electric wanking—not worth your time. Stick with side one. (BR)
(Destroy)

V/A - "Fort Worth Teen Scene, Vol. 3" LP
For those who don't know, Fort Worth, Texas was the global epicenter of outta-control teenage punks armed with guitars, fuzz peddles and hairdos that would still get you a severe leathering nowadays. I love Norton, a label that keeps churning out a history that I still think is very much over looked in the current scene of the morbid black-attired hordes. Most of these tracks are scattered amongst the many of the sixties garage comps but, thanks to Norton, we have all off Fort Worth's finest gathered on a couple off excellently packaged and researched volumes. From the MODS brilliant take on the YARDBIRDS "Evil Hearted You" to the horror driven classic of LARRY & THE BLUE NOTES, "Night of the Phantom" all the way to raw R'n'B mod of the JADES, there's not one throw away filler. (SD)
(Norton, Box 646 Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276)

V/A – "Hardcore Ljubljana 1984-2004" CD
Okay, normally I detest when labels re-ish classic comps and mess them up with a bunch of new tracks from new bands, but I'll make an exception for this one. For the unfamiliar, *Hardcore Ljubljana* was a compilation of various raging, raw Yugoslavian hardcore bands—included in its ranks are UBR, TOZIBABE, KATEGORIJA amongst others. This version—which is what I believe to perhaps be the first legit re-ish of it—contains tracks from new Slavic bands like SROU PA LETU, KASTRATOR and GRADSKA which maintain the same basic spirit of the original. Sorta, I still would prefer it without the new bands, but *Hardcore Ljubljana* still remains a good gateway vehicle for these great Eastern European bands. Enjoy. (MT)
(BatAttak, PO Box 153073, Tampa, FL 33684)

V/A – "I'm Going Ape" EP
Fuck thrashcore, this is noisecore. This one is perfectly subtitled "Violent Fuck'n Noisecore Comp." Four bands and 48 tracks! All on one 7"er. NOISE (Brazil) kicks this thing off with some ultra-shit noisecore. Ten lo-fi blasts of low end rumblings and throat-shredding vocals. Fucking noise terrorists NIHILIST COMMANDO from Finland are my new favorite band. Should have known this would be great—the guys that do Freak Animal records and power electronics greats BIZARRE UPROAR are involved in this. Analog four-track assault noisecore. SARS, junkies, Christians, video games, the US war machine, and lots more all get treatment here. The vocals are right up front, too, so you can actually catch a lot of the lyrics without reading along. True punk rock here. KANIBAL BLOODBATH (UK) who apparently sport a SORE THROAT member, have an old-school noisecore feel (7 MINUTES OF NAUSEA come to mind) add to the chaos. CSMD from Japan have a power electronics/industrial feel to their brand of noise. Great DIY comp from Holland. (RR)
(5 Euro / $7ppd, No Fucking Labels, c/o Nater, marnixstr.145, 2316 EX, Leiden, HOLLAND)

V/A – "Japan vs. Argentina" EP
This is a four-way split between EVERYBODY'S ENEMY, RECONCILE, A.W.A.S., and VENICE. With the exception of Argentina's RECONCILE, this comp really didn't do much for me. The RECONCILE track on side A is great (I recognize this song from another comp that I reviewed a few months back). However, their song on Side B is nowhere near as good. A.W.A.S. play fast, snotty, punk rock that I didn't enjoy too much. EVERYBODY'S ENEMY reminds me of the BOUNCING SOULS. VENICE play fast, screamy, melodic hardcore. Nothing too outstanding from any of the bands. I guess Argentina wins this one. (CC)
(Deathsickle, www.kwonk.com/ds)

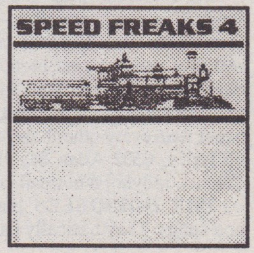
V/A – "Loud 'n' Proud, Vol. 1" CD
International skinhead compilation. Bands from Australia, Japan, South Africa, South Korea, Italy, France, England, and the US come together to celebrate drinking, football, and knockin' the shite out of each other. The music ranges from pretty good (the HAWKS from Osaka), to bad (BULLDOG SPIRIT), to downright abysmal (EMPI), and then there's there's the dumbest band I think I've ever heard—PISSED ON ARRIVAL, from Utah (!) who sing the delightful ditty "End of Islam", with the feel-good chorus "Hey! Hey! Fuck Islam! Oi! Oi! Fuck Islam! No one's gonna miss 'em!" There's also the line "Douse them all with napalm"...you've got to laugh. If you like street-punk, street-core, and *Sesame Street*, then this is for you—it's all a little too… what's the word I'm looking for…*stupid* for me. It reminds of the days when skinheads wore bleached jeans that were too tight for their big fat arses. Now fuck off—I'm trying to take Scunthorpe United into the second division on FIFA 2004. (AD)
(Brutus)

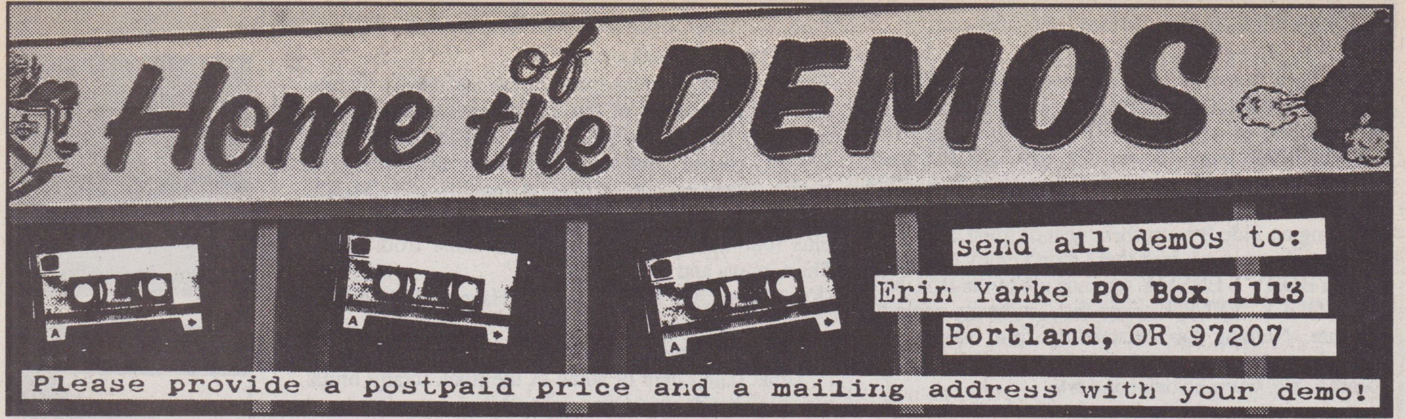
V/A – "Noc Walpurgll 1996-2002" CD
This is a compilation with live recordings of 22 bands that have played at the Walpurgis Night festival in Poland—a feminist/queer punk festival honoring females and non-heterosexuals whom have been persecuted by the church for hundreds of years. Some bands included are: HARUM-SCARUM, HISTERIA, HOMOMILITIA, ANTICHRIST, RE-SISTERS, DIASPORA, GUERNICA Y LUNO, as well as many others. I'm in full support of a project like this, and applaud the punks in Poland for putting this on for several years straight but this live compilation in un-listenable. The sound quality is terrible, and frankly, I can't listen to most of the bands without cringing. (SR)
(Emancypunx, PO Box145, 02-792, Warszawa 78, POLAND, emancypunxrecords@go2.pl)

V/A - "Nuestras Voces" CD
First off it should be mentioned that this is a benefit for a radio station in Barcelona. All in all this is a pretty strong compilation with bands like AMDI PETERSENS ARME, KOBAYASHI, COCHE BOMBA, KONTROVERS, ATROCIOUS MADNESS, 1905 and a whole bunch more. The problem is that the songs get hard to follow because the track listing isn't really accurate. (One of my biggest complaints about most compilations.) And another is that there are a few techno/noise jams on here. Now more than likely these "bands" are down with the cause. But when music like that gets wedged onto these punk compilations, my listening pattern gets thrown off and I quickly lose interest. The bottom line, there is still enough quality tracks on here to make it worth seeking out. (RC)
(Radio Bronka, PO Box 25102, 08080, Barcelona, SPAIN, www.sindominio.net/bronka)

V/A – "Speed Freaks Four" EP
This is a quasi-repress (new covers and newly discovered last 50 copies) of this multi-national grind comp originally released in '99. I'm not sure this quite qualifies for "classic" status as suggested in the liner notes, but it's decent enough, with good tracks from TUMULT, DUDMAN, CRIPPLE BASTARDS and DAHMER, plus four tracks from RUIDO and three from DS13. Short, noisy and fast. (EL)
(Knot Music, PO Box 501, South Haven, MI 49090)

V/A – "The Time of Hell" LP
Great comp here of some of the finer, totally brutal raw punk bands currently gracing this planet—four band churning out track after track of blown out to the hilt, distort-o-rama, d-beat fueled hardcore. Side A features Japan's CONTRAST ATTITUDE and Sweden's SISA CIVILISATIONENS DÖD—who crank out my favorite tunes of the comp including a cover of the classic SVART FRAMTID song "Disciplin" and the killer MISSBRUKARNA jam "Kristen Rening." On the flip we have Brazilian rippers BESTHÖVEN and of course the continual reigning kings of the style, DISCLOSE. Nice, yet brief, liner notes by Mr. Arsehole discussing the title and the concept of hell, which might come off too smarty pants for some of you cider swilling, glue-bag fiends, but which I enjoyed reading. Definitely essential stuff for those of you who enjoy your hardcore punk primitive, raging, and distorted. (MT)
(Game of the Arseholes, PO Box 511, Whippany, NJ 07981-0511, gameofthearseholes@hotmail.com)





BASTARD RADIO has changed formats a bit, now focusing on labels (Terraphile, Burrito, First Blood Family, Profane Existence, Moo Cow, Calambre, and Punks Before Profits) and then having another 20 songs by other bands. This one is more solidly punk all the way through. ($3 ppd. 43 song CD, no lyrics. 2421 W. Jefferson, Phoenix, AZ 85009.) (Erin)

COLISEUM play aggressive hardcore punk rock. It may be similar to something like POISON IDEA but it's much more melodic. The guitar plays power chords across the whole thing, the drummer stays with simple but solid up-tempo beats and the vocalist has a deep growling voice. (4 song CD, with lyrics, www.coliseumsoundsystem.com) (Peter)

COLDBRINGER ride the balance of melodic and hardcore, coming out like LEATHERFACE before the slickness really set in. All except the vocals, which are more gruff and sung slower than Frankie Stubbs, more modern hardcore influenced. The back up vocals go either way, depending on who they're by. Perfect summertime music. ($2 ppd. 6 song CD, lyrics included. 5415 NE 39th, Portland, OR 97211.) (Erin)

COUNTERPOISE have their feet planted firmly in anarcho-punk territory, including both the crusty bits and the art side of things. Vocals range from a speak along moseying pace, to screams and angst. This is a retrospective of the 2ond half of the bands existence. They're working on one for the first half. ($6 ppd. 19 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 317741, Cincinnati, OH 45231.) (Erin)

FLAK play raw metallic hardcore that's fast and steady paced. The vocals are a groaning kind of yelling, with good group backups where the backups are key. ($3.50 US ppd. $4.50 World ppd. 6 song cassette, no lyrics included. 3407 Bates St. Pittsburgh, PA 15213.) (Erin)

GRYRELEOTH play a slower poppier version of emo than what is considered the standard. The singing is earnest, and really sung, with only occasional ventures into the shouted realm. It is of the DC-emo shouting variety, not the screaming pissed off emo shouting. (8 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 317741, Cincinnati, OH 45231.)

HEAVY ARTILLERY play noisy thrash that mixes it up with the slow mosh part style, and some quirky time change stuff. The vocals are great, snotty where they should be, and total pissed off most of the time. (17 song CD, lyrics included. 1331 Kelp St. Oxnard, CA 93035.) (Erin)

THE HOLD play slightly melodic hardcore songs. The songs are all up-tempo, there is plenty (actually too much) guitar wanking. The vocals are sort of a yell but a bit monotone. The recording is okay, but so are the songs, meaning that the band is not bad but there is nothing that makes them any better than every other band out there. (14 song CD, no lyrics, 6302 Allan St., Halifax, NA B3L 1G9, Canada, iddyhof@hotmail.com) (Peter)

THE HORRIBLES play sort of new-wavey pop songs. They basically have that riot girl (I have totally forgotten the correct spelling so I won't even try) sound from some ten years ago. The vocals are snotty and nasal and the music is catchy and would be good to dance to if I could. (4 song CD, no lyrics, 3605 1/2 Motor Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90034, www.thehorribles.com) (Peter)

HUE AND CRY are stripped down and driving basic pissed off hardcore, with undercurrents of catchiness, and moodiness. The female vocals are both sung and shouted, occasionally sort of spoken. The lyrics are great, personal and vague enough to see yourself in them, or at least me. I love this. ($3 ppd. 7 song Cassette, lyrics included. PO Box 170291, San Francisco, CA 94117.) (Erin)

KERVIN hopes to "spark a grand and complex revolution" through this fusion sort of demo. Just so you all know what's coming, "the revolution" will be sung by kind of scat like vocals, with the worst elements of guitar wanking, emo and THE NATION OF ULYSSES combined. (11 song CD, lyrics included. 100 Washington Sq. E. #503, New York, NY 10003.) (Erin)

MAN MADE FILTH and **ANARGEEKS** have a split demo for us. MAN MADE FILTH fits in well with the newer anarcho punk hardcore style. The vocals are scream-shouted. ANARGEEKS have more thrash to them, but also more chaos. The vocals are screamed by more than one person, but they have a few songs where the vocals are punctuated screams, well placed and totally high pitched. ($3 ppd. 6 songs by MMF, 8 songs by AG. Lyrics for both. www.wastedyouthpower.tk, PO Box 16578, 1001 RB, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.) (Erin)

MURDERCOCKS play punk that doesn't forget its rock and roll roots, but remembers why we are the punks. We all win! Mid to fast tempoed, simple and totally driving, with vocals that are sort of sung, and sort of snotty. (8 song CD, no lyrics included. Allessio Esposito, Via Vaglie 46, 10036, Settimo Torinese.) (Erin)

OS LEGAIS have a ton of short songs that are a total mess. A lot of the songs just sound like someone is trying to sing with no music in the background, in fact many times it sounds like they are all really drunk and one guy has an acoustic guitar while his friends sit around screaming and banging on things. The actual punk rock songs usually start out O.K. and then totally fall apart about thirty seconds in. Of course it is recorded on a boom box. It's actually fairly good background music. (28 song CD, no lyrics, Caixa Postal 230, Florianopolis, SC, Brazil, adolfunho@ig.com.br) (Peter)

PACK OF VIPERS play emotional hardcore with a slight metal feel. The songs mostly consist of slow, quiet parts that break into short bursts of hardcore action and then pan out into the double bass pedal, metal breakdowns. The sparse vocals are throaty and harsh and the music is played well. Not so bad considering that it's about ten years late. Put it next to your TAKARU record. (3 song CD, with lyrics, without a place of their own, packofvipers@yahoo.com) (Peter)

PANTINHILARE is a French hardcore band that sounds like they recorded their demo on a boom box in their practice space. Despite the recording quality, or maybe because of it, the songs sound pretty good. There is a ton of energy in the fast, pounding tunes. The vocals are screaming and the music is fast, pretty strait forward and fairly messy. This is worth checking out. (7 song CD, with lyrics (in French), 11, Rue Du Rey d'Ossau, 64230 LESCAR, France, pantinhilare@club-internet.fr) (Peter)

SEND MORE COPS ride the line of angry hardcore where they are totally pissed off, but without the vibe that they're actually going to kill you (or jump you after the show). Mostly playing fast, sometimes pummeling speed, they play straight forward punk rock, with a cool guitar tone, and a rhythm section that doesn't just follow along. The vocals are mostly shouted, but if they deviate from that, it's onto screaming. Quality. (6 song cassette, lyrics included. 251 West Ave. N, Hamilton, ON L8L 5C8 Canada.) (Erin)

SPERM CRICKETS play sloppy hardcore. They specialize in the kind with lots of starts and stops, that changes tempo all over the place. They have two vocalists, the yeller guy, and the one who sounds like Rob Wright. It's a mess, but it also works. They cover a POISON song. ($2 ppd. 11 song cassette, no lyric sheet.11951 7th Ave., Hanford, CA 93230.) (Erin)

THE STABONES play mid-paced basic stripped down rock'n'roll. They vary a little bit, but for the most part, that's where their strengths lie. The vocals are snotty toned and shouted. ($1. 6 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 3327, Charlottesville, VA 22903.) (Erin)

TERMINAL YOUTH have thrown ten songs on to a little tiny CD with tiny artwork. They play aggressive hardcore songs. The music is pretty basic with power chords and ultra fast drum beats but they manage enough breakdowns to be interesting. The vocals are screaming and the recording is pretty good. It's tough. (10 song CD, no lyrics, no place to lay their heads, www.terminalyouth.tk) (Peter)

TOWER OF ROME is your typical screamo band for this generation. Ultra fast songs, screaming vocals, metal inspired and tons of changes to keep you interested. They play the stuff pretty well so if your into that East Coast emo/hardcore thing (like NEIL PERRY, etc.) then you'll want to check this out. (10 song CD, with lyrics, $6 ppd, 15601 Orchid Dr., South Holland, IL 60473, allfastnoslow@aol.com) (Peter)

THE ULTRA FIVE play basic slower garage rock. It has simplicity, over riding organs, and hypnotic pacing. It is not lo-fi at all. The vocals are crooned, and up front in the mix. The band is actually from New York. (24 song CD, no lyrics included. PO Box 50501, 540 13, Thessaloniki, Greece.) (Erin)

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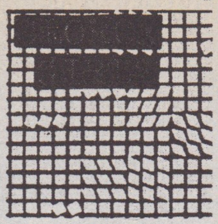

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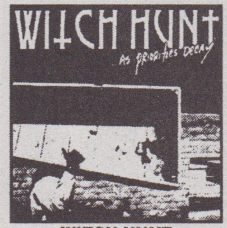

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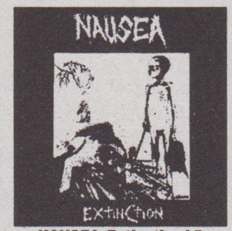

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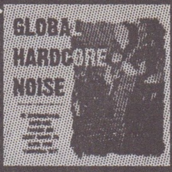

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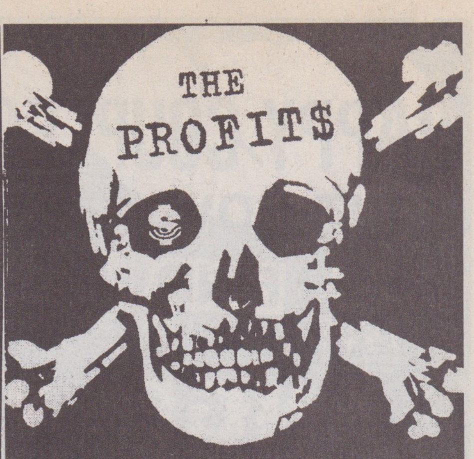

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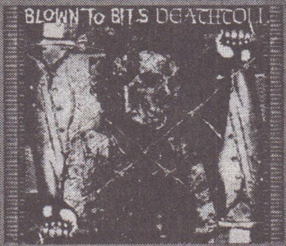

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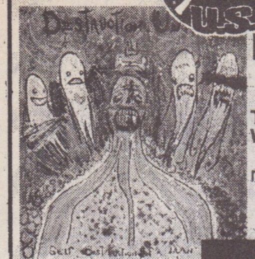

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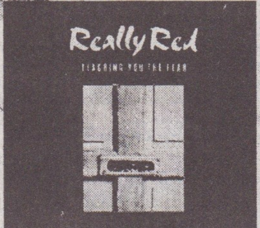

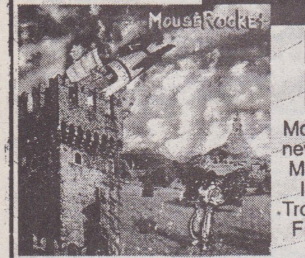

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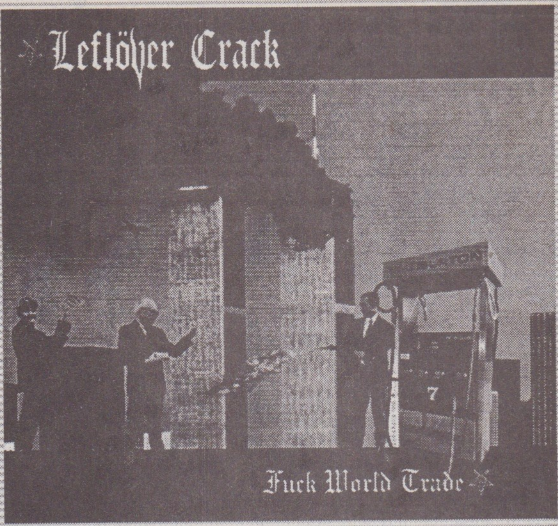

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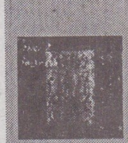

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Please send your zine in for review. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and post paid price. If you want us to include a foreign post paid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

AB #3 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pgs
Crammed with text, *Ab* is filled with reprints from other publications and commentary on them, thoughts on voting, talk of gliders, exotic dining in New Orleans and zine reviews. (MT)
PO Box 190 / Philomath, OR 97370

ARTCORE #21 / £1.50 UK / 3 Europe / $5 world
8.5 x 11 – printed – 40 pgs
Welly just keeps cranking out the quality—always an interesting and good looking zine, *Artcore* is another of those rare consistently good punk zines—with a focus on the present, but mindful of the past and it's importance on shaping the future. This issue features interviews with Knife Fight, 7 Seconds, Biscuit's Texas Bombs (ex-Big Boys), Jets Vs Sharks, Touch & Go (an unpublished interview from 1983!) and articles on Moving Targets, JFA, Battalion Of Saints—plus a great series of pieces on the nearly lost art of flyer art! Great as usual. (MT)
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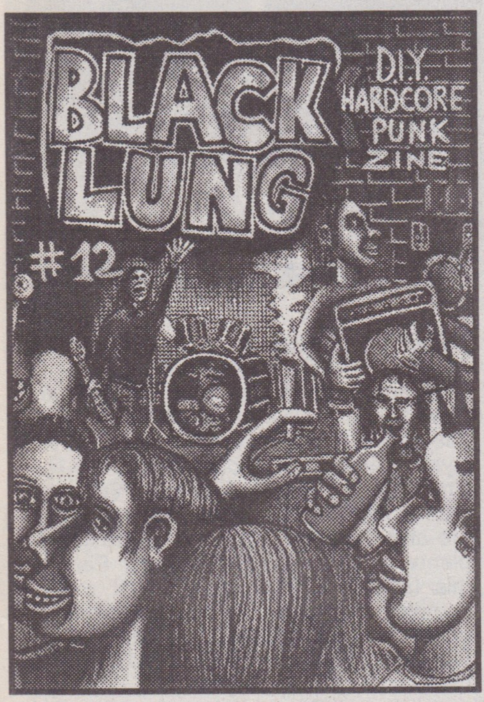


ATTITUDE PROBLEM #34 / 50p UK / $2 world
5.5 x 8.5 – copied - 40 pgs
Always a pleasure to read, *Attitude Problem* is probably one of the best punk rock zines going these days—well written, committed to DIY hardcore punk, and exhibiting a passion that is seemingly missing from too many zines these days. This time around we have interviews with Severed Head Of State, Born/Dead, Pilger and Uro in addition to reviews and thoughts about "war on terror" which has gripped the world. Great. (MT)
PO Box 326 / Leeds / LS7 3YR / England
theveganwarrior@yahoo.com

BLACK LUNG #12 / $4
11 x 8 – copied – 36 pgs – French
This French fanzine can only be described as skateboard, anarchistic hardcore punk. In this issue are interviews with Solitary Neglect, Social Napalm, the Russian George Harrison, Punks Before Profit records, and Besthoven. There are lots of columns, music reviews, and an article on the Paris chapter of Food Not Bombs. (HH)
Alex Simon / 57 Ave du General Morand / 91600 Savigny / Orge / France
blacklung77@hotmail.com

BLACKTHORN #4 / 3 stamps
11 x 17 – printed – 28 pgs
The huge format works really well here, with room for plenty of information and good-looking graphics while remaining easily readable. This issue details the collective's "safer spaces policy" (you get booted from the event and they talk with you about it later), Austin's Bikes Across Borders Mexican puppet theater/teaching exchange tour, some readable fiction, DIY tampons & pads, an interview with a member of this crazy European industrial/fire performance troupe, what September 11th means in Chile... I'm sorry for turning this into a list cuz all this stuff is pretty well done. My favorite part was the biodiesel-fueled punk tour diary, where PDX hardcore kids rigged a truck to run on vegetable grease and made it to NYC and back. They include plenty of technical information as well. My least favorite part was the moaning about how humans killed off mega-fauna in pre-history and are still fucking things up. That's ecology—when humans fuck things up too much, we'll have a die-off just like has happened to almost every animal population in history. This zine is well worth three stamps. (JM)
PO Box 11046 / Portland, OR 97211

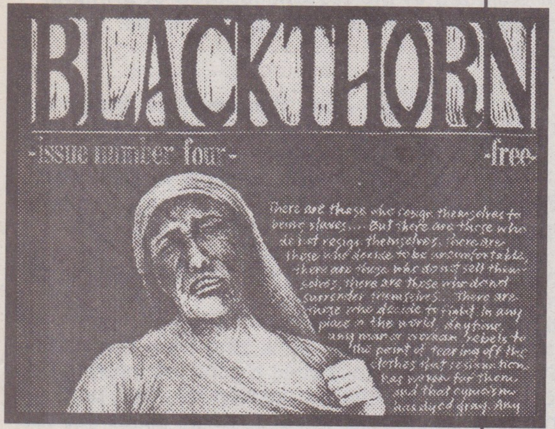
BORN CAUGHT #0 / 50p w/ SAE UK / $2 / trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pgs
Cool political punk zine from England—Simon really does a good job infusing his politics into his passion for punk, particularly South American punk. Inside this cut and paste publication we find interviews with Autonomia, and Sick Terror matched up with well written articles regarding slave labor, the history of barbed wire, a compelling argument for boycotting Coca-Cola and a guide to making your own vegan milk (soy, rice, almond etc). Great zine here. (MT)
PO Box 53 / Leeds / L58 4WP / England

CHUMPIRE #169 & 170 / a stamp or trade
small – copied – 16 & 8 pgs
Both issues feature reviews and photos—the pictures in #169 are too small though. #170 is all music, while #169 also discusses Greg's eyesight and haircuts. If one of Greg's students handed in a paper with handwriting as messy as what he published here, would he accept it? (JM)
PO Box 27 / Annville, PA 17003-0027

CONNOISSEURS OF CONCRETE / $4
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 76 pgs
This is one hell of a mess! The pages were stapled together wrong, the layout is sloppy, the writing is barely readable and the photos are badly copied... but somehow I loved it (despite its devotion to skateboarding)! This has a great sense of humor, lots of SF references, the stories are personal and fucking hilarious, and there are just lots of wacky graphics—the unfortunate thing is no contact information! (MD)
no address

DIG IT! #31 / $5
11 x 8 – printed – 44 pgs – French
I always give this fanzine great reviews and this one will not be any different. I think this is one of the best fanzines from Europe. In this issue there are pages of "Through The Grapevine" which

describes what is happening in the world of rock and roll. Then comes the second and final part of an interview with Johnny Cash's ghost. There is an eight-page interview with Lucas Trouble, and part three of an article on Rubble Records. Finally, there is a review of new Latin American rock and roll, and an article on CGGB. *Dig It!* Is a totally cool fanzine worth checking out! (HH)
C/o Armadillo / 32 rue Pharaon / 31000 Toulouse / France
www.digitfanzine@chez.com



EVERYTHING FALLS APART #4 / $2 ppd or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 28 pgs
I recently realized no one reads this except you, Will. I won't worry about describing what the zine is about. I will just tell you that the reason that I don't want to have to pretend I read it so the review will sound like I gave it a fair chance is *I can't stand computer zines.* Seriously, who can look at this pixilated crap? The only part I almost got into was the work section, which sounded intelligent but those were just the extensive quotes you used, and I still don't understand how you think the food you eat would reach you if someone else didn't "work" so you could buy it. Shut up. (JB)
Will Bartley / PO Box 215 / Leeds / LS26 OWP / United Kingdom
everythingfallsapart@hotmail.com

FREE SOCIETY #15 / $2.50 CDN in Canada / $2.50 USD world
5.5 x 8 – copied – 80 pgs
The editor writes about assimilation, national cultural identity, and punk. It made me think about how much of this zine is taken from the internet, especially the international anarchist news/protest reports. Lots of publications (including *MRR*) do this, but I felt it made *Free Society* more generic. There is a lot of other writing too—it's a big zine with no ads—but even the local stuff wasn't so hot. A bunch of shows are reviewed, but there's no life to this writing at all. Nor was I impressed by Stuart's tales of his paying work or his "crazy dreams." He invests three pages in writing about his town, which was the highlight for me. Interviewed are two guys from Amebix and Brian ex-Catharsis. Brian's talk is from his band's European tour three years ago (Stuart got it off the internet); any Amebix interview is good with me but, that said, this one was ordinary at best. I hope the next issue is 16 pages, tighter, and more exciting. (JM)
Stuart Morris / Box 538 / Bright's Grove, ON / N0N 1C0 / Canada www.geocities.com/freepunk_1999

HEY WHATS UP #3 / $1 / trade / stamps
8.5 x 5.5 - copied - 20 pgs
This zine is comprised of some (extremely) short stories and drawings that don't seem to have anything to do with the stories. Not really my cup of tea, but maybe it will be yours. The best thing about it is the back cover, which says "stop wearing trucker hats." Indeed. (CQ)
1047 Lanette Drive / Cincinnati, OH 45230
tabloidssay@aol.com

HIGH HEELS SLUT #7 / 3 / $3
8 x 5.5 – copied – 60 pgs
This zine traveled here all the way from Belgium and after such a long journey you might think it would want nothing more than to take a nice long nap. Yeah well sorry but this isn't another one of those wussy zines my friend. Haw haw haw. *High Heels Slut* is full of interviews with bands like The Riverboat Gamblers, The Skulls, The Marked Men, The Minds, Anna & The Psychomen, and more. There are also tons of record reviews as well as lots of pictures of the aforementioned bands. There's also this really cool section called 'Teenage Kicks' that interviews old punks about their experiences when they were younger and how those experiences have helped shape who they are today. This zine is worth getting if you're into any of the bands I mentioned earlier. (CH)
C/O Retard Wim / Oude Tramweg 50 / 8560 Moorsele / Belgium
Cottenier.wim@yucom.be

THE INNER SWINE Vol. 10 No. 2 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 64 pgs
Well, this has never been one of my favorites, but somehow I made my way through this one—there were a few moments I could appreciate. There's a long diatribe against tourists and travel, followed by Jeff's stories of a week in London and Paris (okay, you can *tell* you had fun even though you hate to travel!). A lot of personal reflections on life, getting old and sick, and complaints about the human population at large, as well as a demand for all the free drinks that people have offered him over the years via mail or e-mail (so don't offer unless you plan to ship him the booze!). This ends with some fiction. (MD)
PO Box 3024 / Hoboken, NJ 07030

I'VE GOT RABIES #2 / ?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 8 pgs
What a pleasant surprise, a little zine packed with humor, politics, and reflections. This issue has musings on the *The Passion of the Christ* film, faux urban centers, and Ralph Nader. Self-deprecating humor, and keen observations made *I've Got Rabies* a nice read. (CR)
Ben Parker / 5290 Lerner Hall / New York, NY 10027

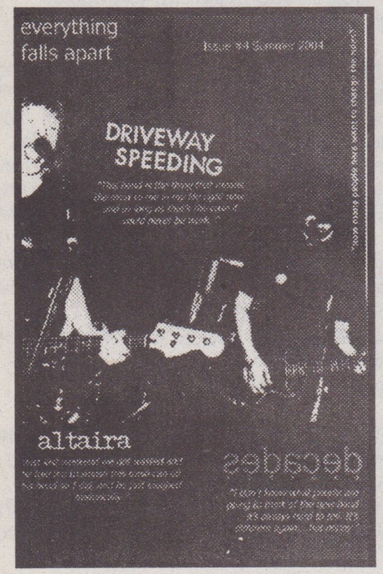
LEFT BACK #3 / $2/free to prisoners
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 44 pgs
I was just thinking about that book *Go Ask Alice* recently, how I stumbled upon it without knowing that it was anti-drug propaganda for young teens, and that it colored my perception of "hard" drugs for years to come. *Left Back* reads similarly, with the aching struggle of up and down and up and down harder each time so that you can hardly stand to keep reading another tragic failure as if it couldn't get worse. The stories in this zine are true, and detail the path of destruction in the life of an addict that eventually leads to jail time. The nature of the material makes it a page-turner, as I became compelled to care what would happen to the fellow who bleeds this tale, and if he will ever get to share himself with the love he has lost. I'm left to wonder, does incarceration rehabilitate? Maybe we'll only know when Chadd gets out if he can live the life he hopes for. (JB)
Reb / Fanorama Distribution / 109 Arnold Ave / Cranston, RI 02905

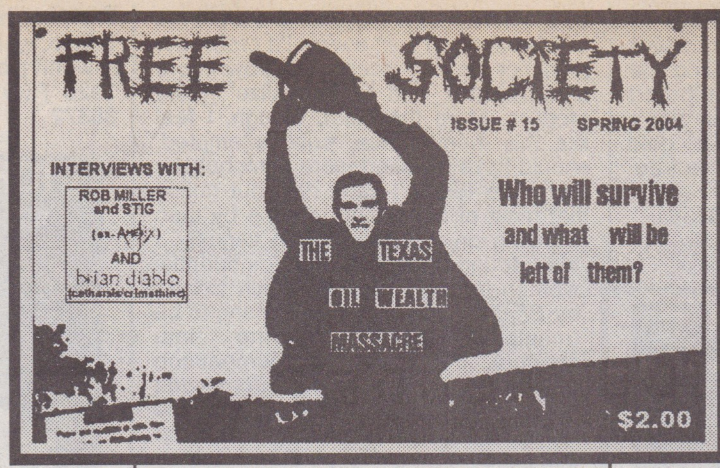
MOVE YOUR ASS #6 / $6
11 x 8 – printed – 44 pgs – Czech
This fanzine shows the central European punk scene is alive and well. Included in this issue are interviews with I Shot Cyrus, Atilla the Stockbroker, N.V.U., Anti-Flag, Thema Eleven, Vaadata Kishut, and Church of Confidence, There are also columns, lots of record reviews, plenty of cool photos and ads. Finally, this fanzine always comes with a CD sampler this issue including thirty-five bands from Eastern Europe. (HH)
C/o Jan Kovar / PO Box 18 / 43601 Chrastava / Czech Republic
moveyourass@seznam.cz

NEGRITA #4 / $1
5.5 x 7 – copied – 28 pgs
The "Abortion Etiquette" issue details ways to be a supportive friend to someone who is having an abortion. A great idea, my only complaint about the zine is the *huge* print, and simplistic graphics and layout—all this could have been said on about half the paper. (MD)
Overground Distro / PO Box 1661 / Pensacola, FL 32591

NOT A GAME #2 / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
Great cut and paste layout sets the mood for this Canadian zine—lotsa nicely reproduced yet photocopied pictures and a slight sloppy haphazard hand with knife'n'glue provide the back drop to interviews with Fucked Up, Moment Of Youth, Career Suicide and a reprint of an old Youth Of Today discussing how they lost their minds and went Krishna. Lotsa photos of your current hardcore heroes and plenty of well done reviews. Worth it. (MT)
Tim Wesson / 59 Prince Edward Blvd / Thornhill, Ontario L3T 7G1 / Canada
notagamezine@hotmail.com

PASAZER #18 / $5?
8 x 12 – 130 pgs – printed – Polish
This is like the Polish *Doll*, which, if you don't know, is like the Japanese *MRR* crossed with some glossy hipster rock mag. Like *Doll*, *Pasazer* has that exciting overflow of content, fabulous photo quality, and diversity of coverage...but also that disconcerting sense that what ties all the bands together is something other than their commitment to DIY punk. If you can deal with the Pennywise thing, and the huge Bad Religion glossy cover shot—then you can move on to the Finland tribute—with Rattus, Terveet Kadet, and Kaaos, and the many, many reviews and features. Somewhere in between, you'll find bands like Avail and Dag Nasty. The mag—not even quite a zine—comes with a CD with 31 punk bands, from the Argies to Harum Scarum to Poland's No Se. On this list, the DIY punk shows its presence loud and clear. Glossy as this is, I don't think it's exactly chasing the big bucks—the six-point type crammed into every possible margin, commenting on every possible punk rock thing, is testament of that. (AC)
PO Box 42 / 39-201 Debica 3 / Poland
pasazer1@poctza.onet.pl





PEACE, LOVE AND CHAOS #6 / ?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 18 pgs
Punk as fuck. So punk that he couldn't give a shit about the layout. The layout is the epitome of ugly. It's computer generated and includes a sweet little collage of famous punk slogans and anarchy signs. Mostly music reviews, an interview with the Stevie Wonderfuls, a political article and a few literature reviews. As the zine boasts, "Still cheaper than beer, cooler than shit, and hotter than your mother... buy it!" I have two words, false advertising. (MF)
PO Box 3397 / Cresta 2118 / Gauteng / South Africa
exist52002@yahoo.com

PEOPS #2 / $4 / $5 world
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 41 pgs
When I saw *Peops* #1 I couldn't put it down. I was supposed to be hanging out with Sara and I just barely participated in conversation for almost an hour, pausing to clutch the book to my chest so she wouldn't kick me out for ignoring her. The tiny explanation of how Fly met each person, coupled with the words they could spit out for the duration that the drawing takes place, makes for a fine taste of a personality that I always want more from. If you haven't seen Fly's portraiture, this second zine is a taste of the giant book version that is the first one. (Certainly more affordable). I can't describe the experience or readability of these stories, they fit so well together and span so many facets of beauty and misery, histories and beliefs, you just have to see it yourself. (JB)
Fly / PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn / NYC, NY 10276

PLASTIC BOMB #47 / $6
11 x 8 – printed – 108 pgs – German
This fanzine is as always full of one hundred percent punk rock. There are interviews with Bad Religion, Slime, Colera, Crucifix, Stage Bottles, Jimmy Keith, and many more bands. There are loads of gig reviews, new release reviews, plenty of cool ads and a thirty-page catalogue. And as usual this fanzine comes with a free CD sampler featuring twenty-nine bands including Texas Terri, Die Hunns, and Poison Idea. (HH)
Postfach 100205 / 47002 Duisburg / Germany
www.plastic-bomb.de

POOR & FORGOTTEN #19 / 2 stamps or trade
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 14 pgs
You can tell a good zine from the quotes in it. First off, "if he's so smart how come he's dead? –Homer Simpson". I don't know what this is about and I already dig it. Fretfully, it's pretty damn sparse. Even in these few opportunities to grant me an explanation of 'wherefore has this publication been brought to my consciousness' writer Matt wholeheartedly dishes pragmatism and delight for punk. Matt, did you really blow someone's head off? All I can really say is, why doesn't *every* zine come with a word search? (JB)
Matt Johnson / PO Box 59 / Linwood, MA 01525

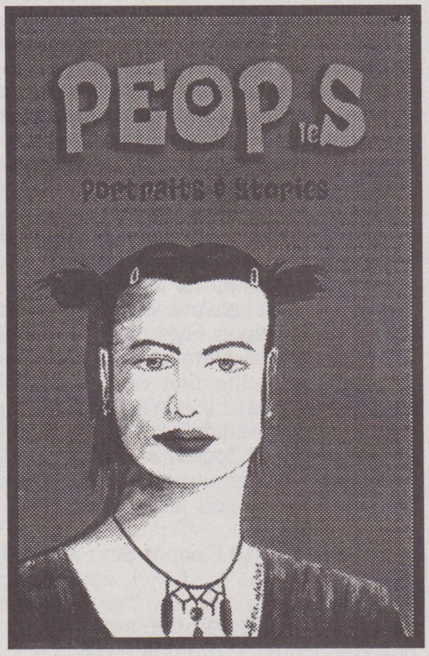
S.C.A.L.P. #2 / $2
5.5 x 4.25 – copied – 68 pgs
S.C.A.L.P. #2 echoes the eerily *Evasion*-esque style of issue one. Issue two is noticeably more coherent and complete than the last. This time around Dan tackles issues such as the boredom of existing as a middle-class white male attending a prestigious university in, as he puts it, "the pinnacle of all creation." He quits his job at a coffee shop in solidarity with

his fellow employees, who were laid-off by a self-righteous new boss. Dan taps into his sensitive side after hearing the new Godspeed You Black Emperor! album and, in following with this zine's theme, "Every dumpster is a gold mine..." and "This bread tastes like freedom." (CH)
PO Box 2164 / Tempe, AZ 85280
lifeinthebikelane@yahoo.com

SHADOWPLAY #10 / free
8.25 x 5:75 – copied – 12 pgs
This issue is full of show reviews and articles on bands such as; The Futureheads, The Blood Brothers, Numbers, The Rapture, The Locust, and The Mountain Goats. This issue also has the usual record reviews and a 'Mullet of the Month' feature. But sorry folks, you'll have to order the new *Shadowplay* to find out who the lucky mullet is this month. (CH)
Alexowl26@hotmail.com / E-mail for free issue

SHORT FAST & LOUD #11 / Spring 2004
8.5 x 11 – printed – 94 pgs
I haven't been following for a while, and here's what's changed: Josh Baker stepped down as the layout guy; Chris Dodge, who founded the zine, stepped down as a columnist (his last active role), and *SF & L* published this, their first theme, on women in hardcore. As far as the whole recognition vs. tokenization debate goes, I happily oscillate as the situation demands. In this case, I tend to side with Ken Prank's column, which applauds the general increase in women's visibility in the hardcore scene without seeing a need for this sort of explicit gesture. I agree with columnist Andy Stickk that women's "generally unremarkable presence" in bands doesn't need to be commented on in reviews as if it were "a stylistic point like a D-beat or a breakdown"—in a way, I'd prefer our presence in the scene to grow more unremarkably, and to normalize in the process. More than that, though, I feel like this theme issue, once attempted, should have included more contributions and more focus. I can't help but notice that most of the writing is done by men reflecting on the issue, often vaguely. I also found the "five most influential women in punk" section, again judged by *SF & L's* primarily male writers, to be unhelpful—especially taking into account the issue of competition between women in a male-dominated scene. And it's a letdown to read that the male contributors think the five most influential women in punk were their moms, sisters, and first crushes. I'm sure these moms and sisters and crushes *were* all amazing, but in almost thirty years, surely we must have more to go on than that! Right? These criticisms aside, I thought there was really precious stuff in here, particularly about the history of women in hardcore, like the section by Loser from *Eye Witness* zine—it's great to see the Electric Deads and the Bags's covers glaring up at you from the newsprint. As far as the regular coverage goes, I enjoyed most of the columns, and the reviews continue to be especially informed and engaged. Interviews in this issue include Witch Hunt, Lauren from Self Defense, Pittsburgh, Metal Mary, and the Usual. (AC)
225 Lincoln Ave / Cotati, CA 94931
akautsch@aol.com

SPIDDER #9 / $2
8.5 x 5.5 -copied - 48 pgs.
Spidder is supposed to be a horror zine. Well I don't know how scary it is but its pretty damn cute. There are lots of comix (which are pretty good), an epitaph for their tour van Old Blue, and some stories.



The best part is the whole zine is handwritten, which I love. This zine is definitely worth picking up. (CQ)
1925 Hwy 69 South / Savannah, TN 38372

TAKE ON YOUR HEROES #3 / free (send postage)
8.5 x 11 – printed – 20 pgs
Take on Your Heroes seems well on the way to finding itself, though for a full-size interview-based zine, it's a little lonely with only the editor's voice in the mix. The spectrum of musical taste and knowledge is tricky to describe—it's both broad and particular. The editor rarely delves into short and fast territory, for example, but comfortably makes laps between Orchid, Leatherface, and the FM Knives. While it flies clear of a pigeonhole, there is a consistency to the coverage that's refreshingly hard to pin down. There's not a hell of a lot in here—a decently researched article and interview with the recently reformed Rocket From the Tombs is the centerpiece of this issue, flanked by a short interview with San Diego's Vena Cava and one with These Arms Are Snakes. (AC)
PO Box 98385 / Atlanta, GA 30359
toyh@comcast.net

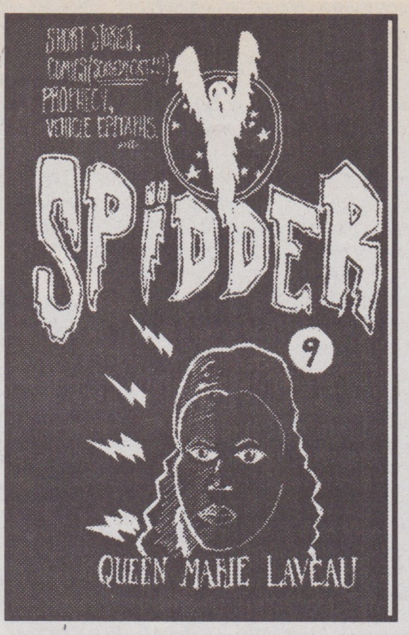
TALK IS CHEAP #1 / $2 US / $3 world
7 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Nicely done first issue of this zine dedicated to the more hawd-kaw side of things. Interviews with Die Young, Pointing Finger, Never Enough and tattoo artist Dan Dittmer. The interviews are fairly well done, and will definitely be enjoyed by fans of Carl Cordova's columns. Lotsa reviews of new 'core records round off the issue. (MT)
3044 Pleasant Ave S #4 / Minneapolis, MN 55408
gilm0075@umn.edu

TENACIOUS #6 & 7 / $2, free to women prisoners, two stamps to male prisoners
5.5 x 8.5 – copied - 30 & 24 pgs
Just the other day I was arguing with a friend about what the word "tenacious"

meant. "I thought it was interchangeable with 'persistent,'" he said. "Sort of," I said, "but specifically, it involves holding on fiercely, like a wild animal." When we looked it up in the dictionary there was nothing about wild animals, but the feeling still holds. *Tenacious*, the zine, is a journal of art and writing by incarcerated women. While based out of New York, it reaches and solicits pieces from women's institutions all over the country. For once I appreciated the editor's invisibility, which made it feel less like one person's project and more like a conversation, or a cooperative. The writing, without exception sent by women prisoners, covers quite a range, from a report (in #7) on the value of maintaining educational programs in the prisons, to anguished personal stories that contemplate the hows and whys. What struck me over and over as different from similar men's' collections was the women's urgency about improving prison conditions—in health care, sanitation, food, work and educational opportunities, access to movement and to outside contact, etc. In addition, many stories came back to domestic abuse by men, which ironically lands many women behind bars, where

they then have to endure ritualized sexual harassment by officials. There's a lot to learn here, and a lot that needs to change, but this zine, by bringing out these stories, drawings, and essays, is a great start. (AC)
Black Star / 1414 Lincoln Pl / Brooklyn, NY 11213

THE THREAT OF DIALECTS? #1 / $2 ppd
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 34 pgs
This is a great document, but I think there is a narrow audience for it. The author studied her (Providence, RI) punk scene for her senior thesis in applied linguistics, and this is the paper she handed in. Since it was written for non-punk academics, a lot of it is redundant for punk



non-academics. The point of the study was to tell what the kids are really about by seeing what aspects of punk they talk about the most, which things have multiple names, etc. She is bummed when her research reveals punks are mostly interested in commodities and in-scene hierarchies. Of course, papers for school do not make the best zines, but I liked this one a lot. Punk academics and linguists will appreciate it, and as a bonus, you get insight into the Providence (and New England) style and slang, where "dude" is a dis and shows are held (and punks live) in mills—abandoned hydro-powered industrial buildings. (JM)
Jessthreat / PO Box 3481 / Providence, RI 02909

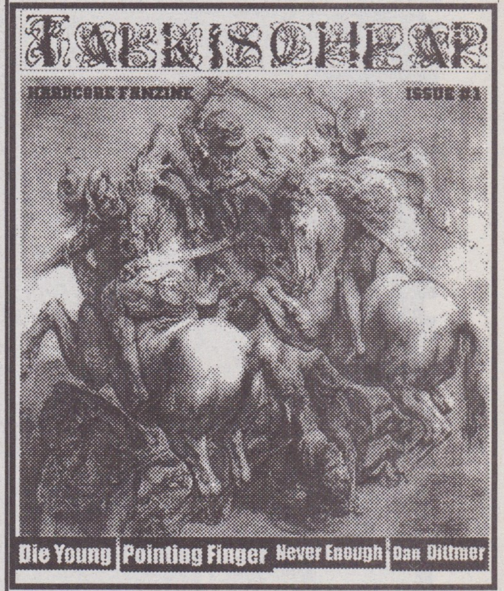
TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN #20 / $4.95
8.5 x 11 - printed - 68 pgs.
Too Much Coffee Man is a great zine. This issue there are stories about travel, more *Too Much Coffee Man* and Chomsky & Mailer (a ripoff of Calvin and Hobbes) and an interview with Bruce Campbell! If you have never heard of this you should get it, and if you have heard of it why are you reading this? Go out and buy it! (CQ)
PO Box 14549 / Portland, OR 97293

TROUBLE IN MIND #6 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 46 pgs
This zine fucking rules, although I prefer the term graphic novel for this one. Erik is an excellent writer and artist. These two combined equal quality entertainment. I laughed, I cried. Letter pressed covers. Kudos. (MF)
PO Box 44254 / Detroit, MI 48244

TURPENTINE #4 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 22 pgs
This zine reminds me of high school. I didn't really have fun in high school. I didn't really have fun reading this zine either. There are some decent articles of the political nature. *Turpentine* includes articles such as "Jack Black is my Rock God" with a neat little collage of the "Rock God" himself. Also a very informative article on Empire Records... yes, the early 90s teen comedy. I must say that this really isn't my thing but it seems that the editor is having fun and that's all that matters. Don't quit your day job. (MF)
1162 Juliet Ave / St Paul, MN 55105
Turpentine@comcast.net

WORKING STIFF REVIEW #1 / $5
8.5 x 11 – copied – 24 pgs
I've been waiting for a zine like this to be made for a long while, a collection of writings by workers on work sprinkled with humor and angst. Sadly, this first issue is a bit of a disappointment. To be fair, it is the inaugural issue, and all writing is by one person, but most of the essays are pretty uninteresting or just downright dull. The content of this issue covers some harsh and oversimplified thoughts on tipping (oddly contradicted in a later article on bad restaurant manners), the invasive and evil nature of Wal-Mart, and the trend of job titles over real promotions or raises. The writing lacks an identity or humor that would make the subjects more readable. Hopefully with a greater diversity of contributors this zine can serve as a collection of experiences rather than a collection of random thoughts. Steep price too. (CR)
608 E 3rd Ave / Castle Rock CO 80108

ZINE WORLD #21 / $3
8.5 x 11 – printed – 48 pgs
A great resource for zine-fans... this has dozens and dozens of detailed, (mostly) well-written reviews of different types of zines. It's sad to think of how things were back in *Factsheet Five* days, but this will have to do! There are also many articles related to free-speech and self-publishing. (MD)
PO Box 330156 / Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0156



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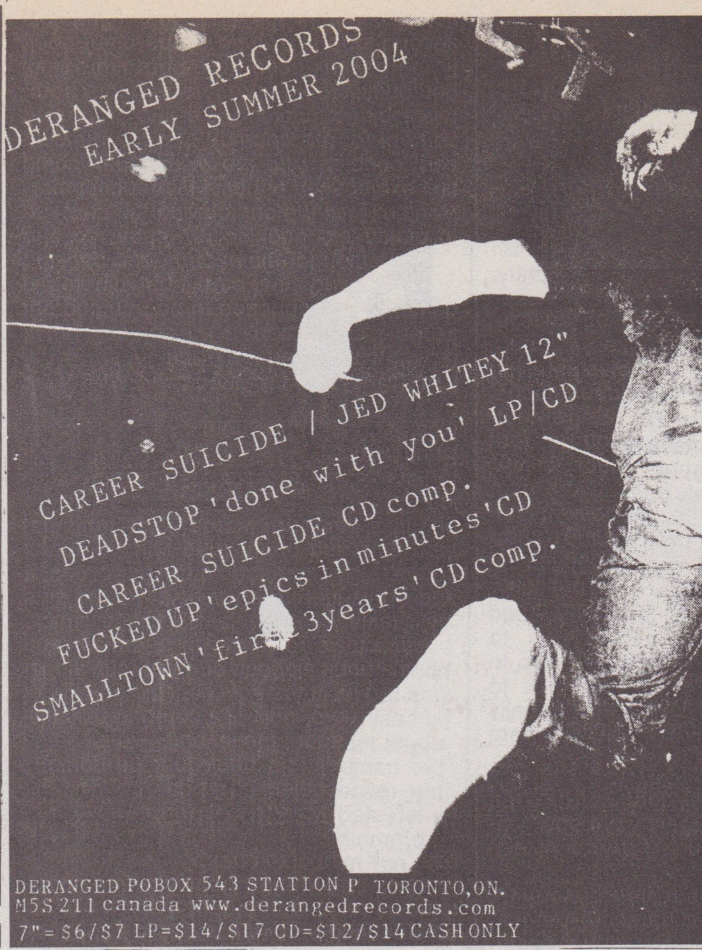

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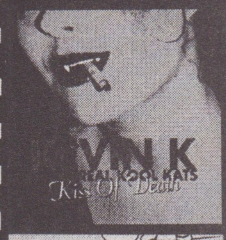
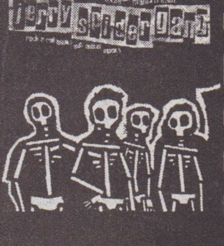
"The Joy of Killing"
-The Distraction /
The Hatepinks Split

The HATEPINKS "Sehr Gut Rock und Roll"
LP (en vinyle rose! Merde!) / CD
Awesome record. I got the CD for review, but I had already been rockin' out to the LP version (on glorious pink wax) for a few weeks. A newer trashy punk band that would make Johnny Thunders proud.100% recommended. (AMPress) 100 % electrifying rock n' roll...insanely catchy... screaming bad-ass vocals....a HUGE guitar sound...unbelievable energy that will get your heart racing and your fists pumping...(Now Wave)

PETIT VODO
"A little big pig..."LP/CD
French, very French. Odd, Bluesy rock and roll that brings to mind The FALL on more than one occasion. Irreverent, weird and a bit creepy, but with a solid backbeat to make you shake a tail feather. Very good newer label. I like everything that I have heard off of it so far. (AMPress)



KEVIN K "Kiss of death"-LP/CD
Mr. K can play guitar and write a song better than any overhyped. flavor of the month pretty boy rockstar you care to name. Those of you who realize that the MUSIC is what really matters will want to put Kiss of Death near the top of your "albums to buy" list. (Now Wave) Power pop! His raspy and soulful voice reminds me of the greater aspects of glam and bubble gum. He knows where the action is. He had the action right there in his hands and she slipped away, but he got a great record out of it. (Maximum Rock&Roll)



JERRY SPIDER GANG
"Exile on mainstream" LP/CD
Exile on Mainstream is a record that I've been listening to on the train during my morning commute... something about the whiskey-tinged Motorhead-style rock & roll makes the prospect of full-time employment a little less painful. For your money you get covers of tunes by the Saints and Union Carbide Productions, which proves that the Gang have been doing their homework like they should. They've got hooks. Praise the Lord (Maximumrock & Roll)

NEUROTIC SWINGERS "Artrats"-LP/CD
The NEUROTIC SWINGERS are impressive, they know how to write a hook. They sound like the HIVES hanging out with the BRIEFS flipping through old issues of Cream and Sniffin' Glue.(Maximum Rock & Roll)
Wow. Wow! Wow!!!! Holy hell, what's up with all these GREAT fucking French punk bands? The latest from the Neurotic Swingers is tearing up my stereo and reaffirming my belief in that thing called rock n' roll. 100 % killer punk rock.(Now Wave)

Distribution : Road To Ruin (USA) Sonic Rendez-Vous (Netherlands) Wrench (UK) Incognito, Dirty Faces, Greenhell, Alien Snatch, Screamin' Apple, Soundflat (Germany) Myrmecoleo (Japan) Rockin' Bones(Italy) Munster (Spain) Demolition Derby (Belgium)

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Urban Head Raw "Human Instinct" Cd Japanese Crust Metal influences that will blow you away.
Agathocles "Alive And Mincing" Cd Brutal Grindcore from Belgium. We all know them by now.
Words That Burn "Spawning Ground For Hatred" Cd / Lp (Mailorder gets Ltd to 100 Red Vinyl) Surly, gurgling mid-paced "crusty" hXc that proves what E.N.T. SHOULD have sounded like as a death metal band... (Ex Remission) (Violence Zine)
To What End? "The Purpose Beyond" Cd Burly and melodic hardcore / punk from Sweden featuring current members of Wolfpack
Remains of the Day "Hanging on Rebellion" Cd / Lp This is a masterpiece and has cemented R.O.T.D.'s position as one of my favorite bands. Remains of the Day transcend crust and add so many new elements to the sound, making it impossible to truly classify them... (Daredevil.de)
Asschapel "Fire And Destruction" Cd / Lp Asschapel lays down 12 tracks of sheer metalized head banging destruction.
Warspite "Gallery of the Macabre" Cd This is probably the best death metal release I've heard all year... (Aversionline.com)
Disgust "The Horror Of It All" Cd / Lp Brutal UK D-beat crust from a founding E.N.T. member. (Formerly on Earache and Nuclear Blast Recs)
Groinchurn "Already Dead" Mcd $5.00 ppd US / $6.00 World 9 tracks of tightly produced catchy Death/Grind with a pinch of crustiness.
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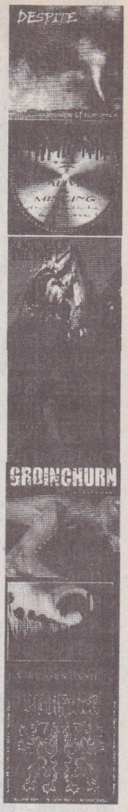
Wolfpack "Allday Hell" Cd / Lp 100% raging Swedish HC that fucking hammers from start to finish.
Misery "Early Years" Cd Discography of their early material. Brutal legendary crust that is esential in everyone's collection if you like crust.
Remains of the Day "An Underlying Frequency" Cd / Lp R.O.T.D. play a mix of violent crust, grind and hardc... with alot of awesome melodic guitar work in there too. Totally essential in every aspect. Contains their 7" plus extra tracks.
Misery / Extinction of Mankind Split Cd Brutal Crust from Both bands. Some say this is each bands best material ever.



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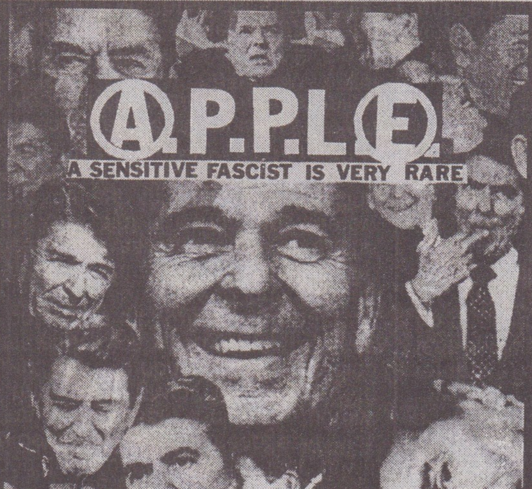

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Sapporo HERESY style from the late 80s
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Fierce Swedish fast HC! US TOUR THIS SUMMER!
THREATENER 2nd- EP
2nd round of ultra fast core
HERO DISHONEST - LP
Fucking 100% hi energy Finnish HC. Crucial!
LORDS OF LIGHT - EP
Wicked three man fast core/grind, fucked up!
DEADFALL - Tour EP
For the tour w/BRUCE BANNER. Manic SF HC.
RUNNING FOR COVER - EP
INFEST meets CROSSED OUT meets...Holy shit!
CHARM - New EP
Crazed Japanese fast core mayhem.
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HIT ME BACK/OUT OF VOGUE - Split EP
Raging hormone fueled Socal fast HC
IRON LUNG - LP/CD
Grind? Power violence? How about brutal-ass 2 man fast core. Scorcher! CD w/ extra shit.
SCHOLASTIC DETH - Discography CD
Everything plus unreleased, live and video

Coming up on 625 NOT SO FAST:

LOVE SONGS - 2nd CD
Descendents meet Yo Mamma, awesome.
THIS IS MY FIST/GIANT HAYSTACKS-EP
TIMF angst-punk:GH is MINUTEMEN worship

ALMOST FRIGGIN NEW DAMN IT!

FAR LEFT LIMIT - EP
High energy fast HC from Australia
INFECT - LP
From Brasil...political, all female fast hardcore. Fucking awesome!
LIFE SET STRUGGLE - EP
6 songs of fast skate-core
THEY LIVE - LP
Insane fastcore from Buffalo.
THE KILL - Demo Ep
Redefining Aussie grind core. 1000mph.
MACHINEGUN ROMANTICS - EP
Fast as fuck HC from Texas...
DOMESTIK DOKTRIN - Ep
Crazed thrash from Indonesia
THREATENER- EP
Debut fastcore from Michigan. No 80s, no metal, nothing but FAST FUCKING CORE
DISCARGA - New 10" LP
Brand new LP for Euro tour! Brasilian LARM
FAR LEFT LIMIT - EP
High energy fast HC from Australia
INFECT - LP
From Brasil...political, all female fast hardcore. Fucking awesome!
LIFE SET STRUGGLE - EP
6 songs of fast skate-core
XSECRET 7X - Ep
11 songs on 1 side! Singapore fast attack
NINE CURVE- Ep
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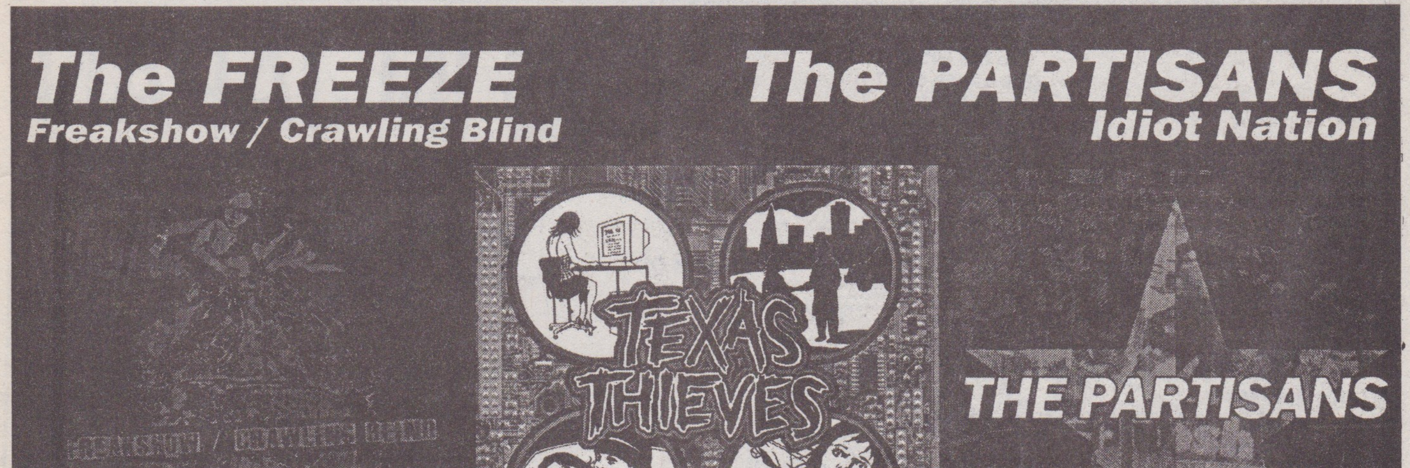

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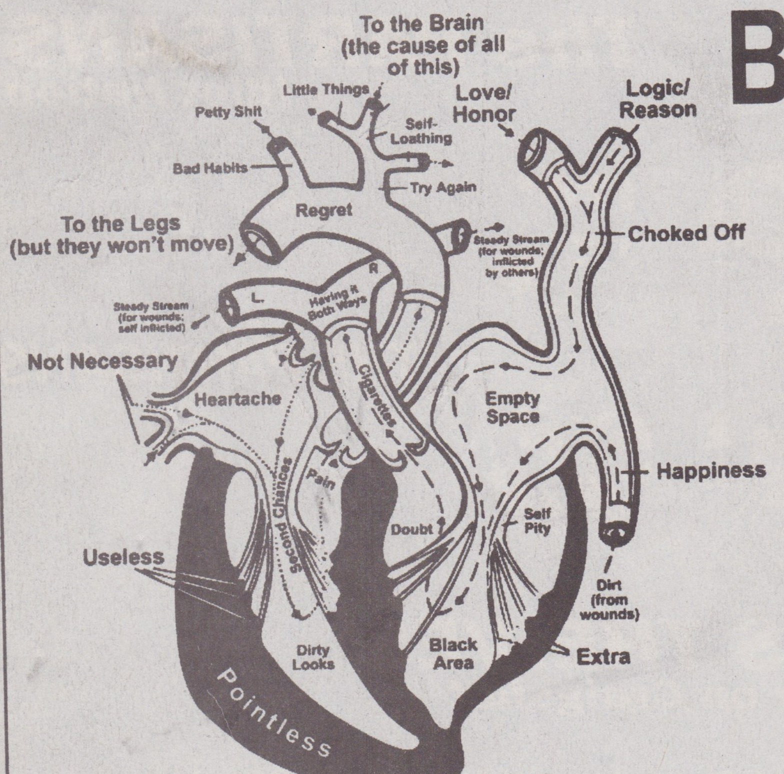

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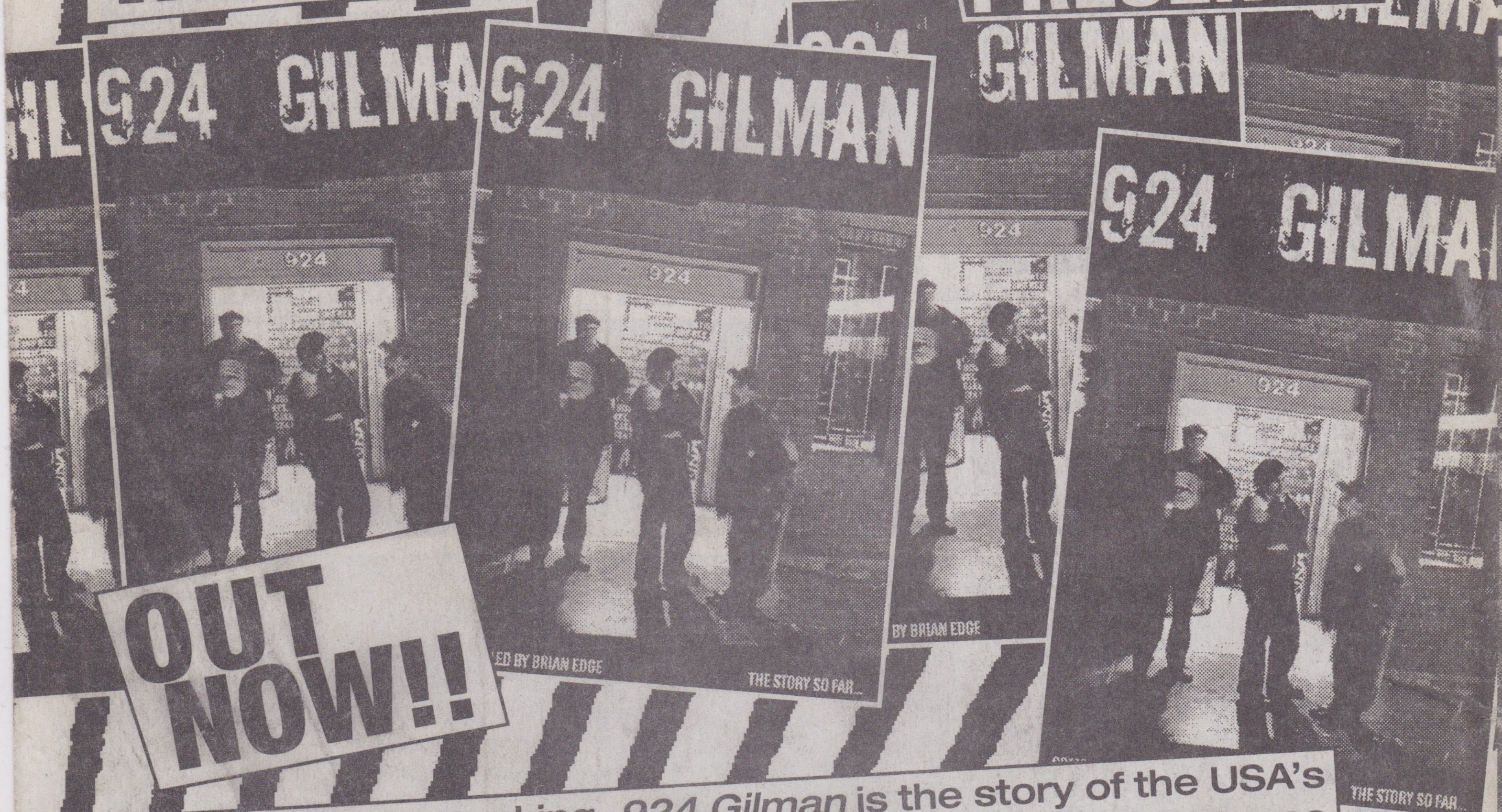

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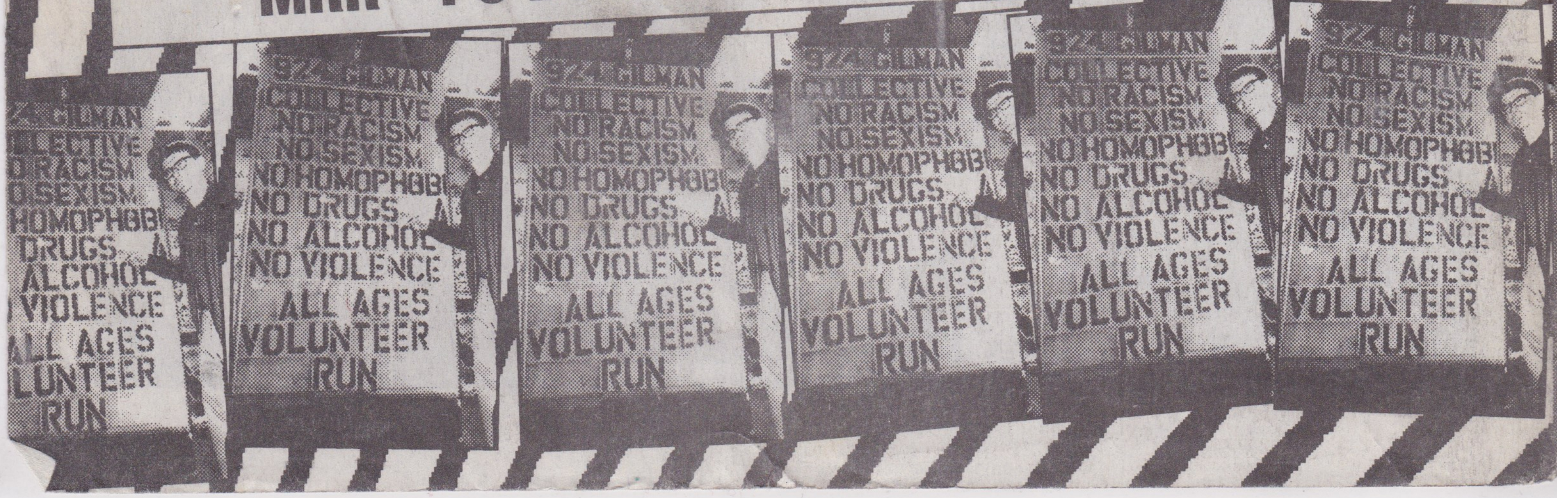
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